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Welcome

We've got lots of Easter goodies inside this issue

16

We have firmly turned our backs on winter here at *Period Homes & Interiors* and are looking ahead to the sunnier months. The shops are bursting with spring buys, and we've bought you the best of them in our extended shopping pages (starting on page 7). Our real homes this issue focus on kitchens. From clean and streamlined to industrial and chic, choose your favourite then get the look with hand-picked items selected by our shopping expert. Meanwhile, our At Home section has ideas for updating every room, including a six-page special on bathrooms, plus eight pages of spring decorating ideas.

And I can't leave you without asking what you think of our vibrant new-look cover. Do let me know by emailing me at phi.ed@kelsey.co.uk. See you next month.

ZOE BALDING, **EDITOR**

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GET IN TOUCH

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Period Homes & INTERIORS

MARCH 2016

EDITORIAL
phi.ed@kelsey.co.uk
EDITOR **Zoë Balding**
ART EDITOR **Kate Holt**
CONTRIBUTORS **Leigh Clapp, Emma Clayton, Andrea Manley, Linda Parker, Sophie Warren-Smith**

ADVERTISING
ADVERTISING MANAGERS
Jo Holmes 07958 602347, kelseymagazines@gmail.com
Toyah Power 07701 071926, toyah.power@kelsey.co.uk
COMMERCIAL MANAGER
Emma Doran 01959 543706, emma.doran@kelsey.co.uk

PRODUCTION
Melanie Cooper 01733 362701
kelseycopy@atgraphicsuk.com
PRODUCTION MANAGER **Jackie Aubrey**

MANAGEMENT
MANAGING DIRECTOR **Phil Weeden**
CHIEF EXECUTIVE **Steve Wright**
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FINANCE DIRECTOR **Joyce Parker-Sarioglu**
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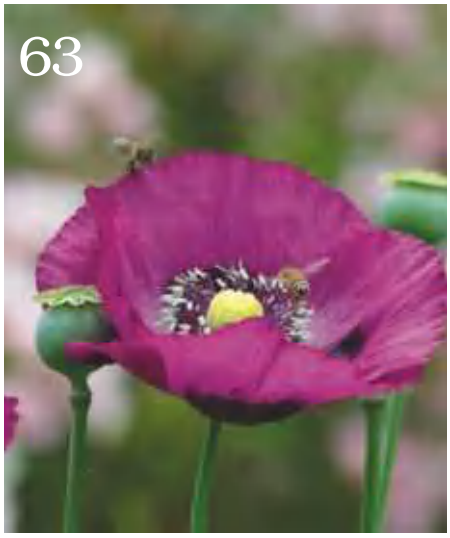

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PHOTOGRAPH STEPHANIE SMITH/GAP INTERIORS

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This month

This attractive metal table would look equally at home on the patio or in the conservatory.
Capri bronze mesh bistro table, £44.99; Farmers Market teapot, £19.99; Farmers Market jug, £14.99; Farmers Market mug, £5.99; all Dobbies.

For stockists turn to page 112

Did you know...
Chickens lay more in good weather. With the warmer months approaching, chicken keepers can look forward to receiving five eggs a week from each of their flock.

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IN THE NEWS

Our round-up of design buys, favourite home products and new-season trends

SCENTS OF SPRING

It's National Fragrance Day on 21 March, so there's no better time to fill your home with the scent of freshly picked spring flowers.

Garden Urn votive and tealight holder, £29.90, Partylite (www.partylite.co.uk).

PH&I LOVES

Easter celebration

The dining table is the focal point for family gatherings at Easter. Decorate mantelpieces and doorways for the occasion with this wooden bird house, £4, from John Lewis. www.johnlewis.com.

VINTAGE FLORALS

Get creative this month and try your hand at making your own kitchen textiles. The beautiful floral fabric shown here is Sweet Pea in Marmalade, £14.99 per m, from the Pickle collection by Prestigious Textiles, and has us thinking ahead to long, lazy days of summer (01274 688448, www.prestigious.co.uk).

PLATES OF STYLE

For the prettiest lunch setting, lay the table with this Katie Alice English Garden dinner plate, £7.99; White Floral side plate, £5.99; and English Garden salad servers, £14.99; all Creative Tops (www.creative-tops.com).

The chocolate pot base can be personalised

Kids will love this Mini Egg Easter sweet tree, £17.99, www.cuckooland.com

Hand-iced biscuits inspired by Fabergé eggs, £30, www.biscuiteers.com

The good of wood

According to the saying, you shouldn't have anything in your home that isn't useful or beautiful. With that in mind, these slatted bread boards, from £185 each, from www.theoakandropecompany.co.uk, definitely make the grade.

Tiles with style

This tiled panel is a pretty yet practical option for installing behind a range cooker. Chicken Coop Colour on Off White 40-tile panel (each tile measures 127 x 127mm), £649.95, The Winchester Tile Company (www.winchestertiles.com).

No country kitchen is complete without an eathenware hen

Emma Bridgewater egg basket, £54.95, www.liberty.co.uk

LIGHT FANTASTIC

If we buy anything this month it will be this statement table lamp, £60, from BHS, which mixes the trend for all things industrial with a nostalgic floral lampshade reminiscent of the 1970s. ww.bhs.co.uk.

March is the month for spring cleaning, so before you start check out the range of traditional feather dusters, radiator brushes, carpet beaters and shutter brushes available from www.eddingtons.co.uk, all made from natural materials.

TOO GOOD TO EAT

Easter eggs don't get prettier than this handmade egg, created using the finest Venezuelan Criollo and Trinitario cocoa beans by the chefs at legendary Yorkshire tea room Bettys.

Milk chocolate spring flowers egg, 24cm (h), £49.95, www.bettys.co.uk

EGG-STRA SPECIAL

Wreaths aren't just for Christmas. Hang this Easter-themed rustic egg and feather wreath from your front door or mantelpiece or place it on the dining table and use as a surround for candles. It measures 26cm (dia) and costs £17 from The Contemporary Home, 0845 130 8229, www.tch.net.

On a roll

Keep the children occupied during the Easter holidays by baking fun cookies. This set of three mini rolling pins is each imprinted with a charming seasonal motif and costs €27 (around £20) from www.dawanda.com, a European online marketplace that ships to the UK.

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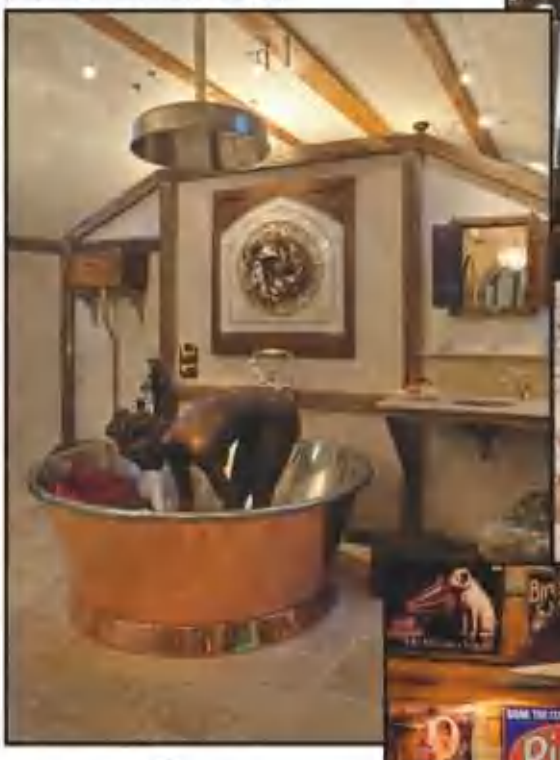

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Coming up ROSES

Take your cue from the dusky warmth of Rose Quartz to inject a hint of subtle colour

ROSE QUARTZ
PANTONE 13-1520

Chosen as one of the Pantone Colours of the Year for 2016

Set of four rose tea spoons with gift box, £13.25, Melody Maison.

PH&I LOVES

Rose Hummer medium lamp with rose flex, 47cm (h), £139, Anna Jacobs.

Velvet dusky-pink cushion, 50 (w) x 50cm (d), £35, Eclect Design.

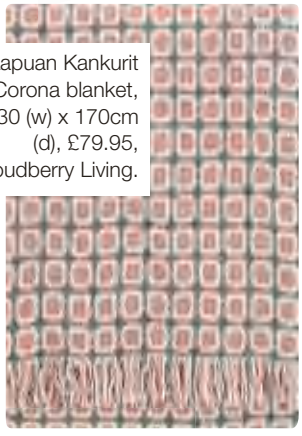
Zeppelin two-seat sofa in Rose, 154 (w) x 94 (d) x 76cm (h), £730, Sofa.com.

Rose Quartz (PJ 8541) Biora 7 Classic Matt interior emulsion, £34 for 2.7 ltrs, TeknosHome.

Mixing bowls, set of three, £15; stacking floral mugs, £15; tea towels, set of three, £12.50; all Marks & Spencer.

Button Spot Stanley mug, £6.50, Cath Kidston.

Lapuan Kankurit Corona blanket, 130 (w) x 170cm (d), £79.95, Cloudberry Living.



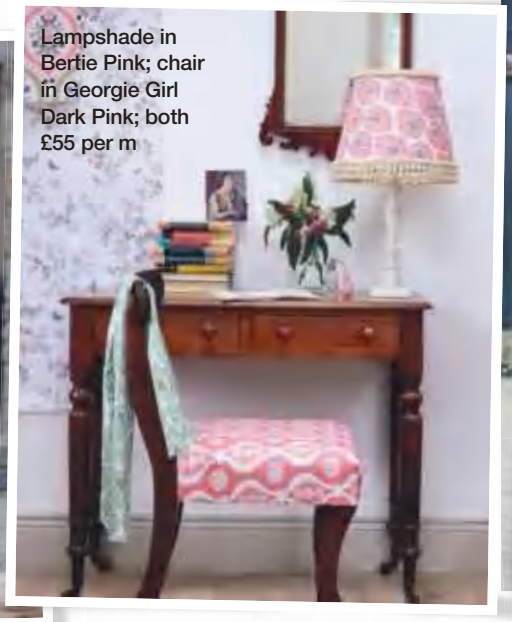
Rose geometric bud vase, 15cm (h), £12.95, MiaFleur.

Measuring spoons, set of four, £4, George.

For stockists turn to page 112

DON'T MISS THE APRIL ISSUE, ON SALE 11 MARCH, FOR **MORE DECORATING IDEAS** USING THIS PRETTY PASTEL PALETTE

Chair in Hermitage Birds Ochre, £55 per m



Lampshade in Bertie Pink; chair in Georgie Girl Dark Pink; both £55 per m

Tablecloth in Charley Bird Blue, £55 per m; cushions, from a selection from The Hermitage collection

Camilla fabric in Fuchsia Pink, £55 per m

Lovely Sophie fabric, £55 per m

5 minutes with...

Designer Charlotte Gaisford, creator of colourful patterned textiles, wallpaper and accessories

How did you get into what you do? After working as a decorative painter, in 2010 I fulfilled a long-held ambition to go to college. I graduated with a first class BA Hons degree in Fashion and Textiles, which gave me the confidence to set up my fabric design business.

Where does your passion for textiles stem from? I love to see how scale and colour can transform a fabric. My passion stems from wanting to create fabrics that people like and want to decorate their homes with.

Have you always been interested in making and designing? Ever since I was an avid fan of *Blue Peter* I have created, and this has carried on into adulthood.

What was the first piece you ever made? It was a tropical-themed pattern. I was so proud of it, but I have learned so much since then.

What inspires your designs? I love visiting museums and looking at old textiles. Colours are my main draw and I like them bright. I know everybody plays it safe, but colour really makes a difference to a room.

What is your unique selling point? My designs are traditional with a hint of modern mixed in.

Explain the creative process to us. The design process can take a few months, and some patterns take longer to create than others. Once I have a collection, I will work them into different colourways. I try to create colours that people will easily be able to incorporate into existing schemes.

What design trend do you predict for the year ahead? Bland interiors are on the way out this year. We need more colour and more pattern in our lives.

What's next for your business? I have a new nursery collection coming out, which was inspired by an old piece of wallpaper I found in an inherited chest of drawers. Later in the spring I will be launching my 2016 collection, Summer Tea, which is inspired by my visits to the V&A and the Museum of Natural History in New York, and is based on early chintz patterns.

CHARLOTTE'S TOP TIPS...
Using pattern in your home

- Start off buying the fabric for the curtains or blinds. Choosing paint is easy as you can match a colour within your fabric to the walls.
- Gather together samples of all the fabrics you like. I have always been amazed at how different a fabric can look from a photo on the internet and when it arrives in the post.
- Find your 'showstopper' fabric and then add complementary fabrics alongside it. You will always find that a stripe, a spot and a plain will go together. The fabrics don't literally have to be stripes and spots – the motifs on the fabric may be arranged as a stripe or a spot.
- Mix fabrics that have a variation in scales. Small scale will add texture to a scheme; large-scale prints create drama and atmosphere.

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On the boil

We've found egg cups to appeal to every member of your family, so which ones will be appearing on your breakfast table?

Quail Hare egg cup, also available in other designs, £10.95, Liberty.

Sagaform egg cups on bamboo stand, £22, The Scandinavian Shop.

Did you know...

For perfect runny eggs, bring water to the boil, reduce to a rapid simmer and immerse eggs for five minutes.

Pheasant egg cup, £6.50; plate, from £11; egg cosy, £6; tea cosy, £13; mug, £10; table runner, £18; all Sophie Allport.

For stockists turn to page 112

Comes with its own cute egg cosy

Garden Bird egg cup and dome, £10, Cath Kidston.

Blue Bunny egg cup, also comes in green, £4.50, The Contemporary Home.

Katie Alice set of four retro egg cups, £14.99, Creative Tops.

Floral hen egg cup, £4.50, At Home with Ashley Thomas at Debenhams.

Paisley Rose egg cup, £2.95, Dotcomgiftshop.

PH&I LOVES

Baby Bunny egg cup, £16, Hop & Peck at White Rabbit England.

Ted Baker Blanchard egg cup and snack plate, £24.99, Very.

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READY-TO-CREATE

colour schemes

Update a neutral grey colour scheme for the season ahead with bright pops of yellow and fresh spring green

Combine spots, stripes and floral motifs for a harmonious effect. On awning: Leaf Dance in Smoke/Charcoal; on awning frill, tablecloth frill and cushions: Pretty Maids in Saffron/Winter and Smoke/Limestone/Winter; on tablecloth: For The Love of Rose in Duck Egg/Charcoal; on cushion on bench: Gypsy Garland in Duck Egg; all £48 per m; Vanessa Arbuthnott.

Add cushions in mix-and-match patterns for relaxed seating

Invest in useful seating
Heritage Mustard Turner bench, available in three sizes, from £855, Lilly Loray.

Kitchen essential
Enamel duck-egg blue tray, £14.95, Annabel James.

Team delicate vintage floral china with retro-inspired linen. Garden Ochre tablecloth, from £40, Cottage in the Hills (available from March).

Vibrant yellow

This Scandinavian-style grey and yellow colour scheme with duck-egg blue accents is so fresh and pretty for a breakfast room or conservatory. Traditional interiors are best suited to restrained shades of mustard, while sunshine-yellow is perfect for adding a bright pop of colour to retro room schemes to herald the start of spring.

Great for inside or out
Duck-egg blue lantern, 14cm (h), £13.95, Melody Maison.

Practical and pretty
Mini Moderns enamel kettle, £32, Quince.

Mid-century styling
Apollo mustard-yellow jug, £21, Eclect Design.

The perfect blue
Notting Hill 213 Marble Matt emulsion, £38 for 2.5 ltrs, Mylands.

Statement cushion
Peacock flower cushion, £55, LuLu & Luca at In-Spaces.

3 of the best springtime prints

For stockists turn to page 112

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3

1. Poppy Meadow floral linen/cotton fabric in Primrose, £35 per m, Laura Ashley **2.** Magnolia wallpaper, £48.90 per roll, Vallila Interior **3.** Boråstapeter Ingrid Jubileum 5477 Easy Up wallpaper, £29 per roll, Scandi Living.

PH&I LOVES

Retro styling
Karla armchair by Anja Jane, £449, Swoon Editions.

READY-TO-CREATE

colour schemes

Serene green

This silvery-grey floral heritage wallpaper makes a striking statement, even when it's teamed with a bright accent colour. Green is such an easy colour to decorate with as it goes with just about every other hue in the spectrum. Add subtle touches of silver to keep this scheme feeling elegant and ultra-luxe.

Elegant seating
Club Louis XV armchair, £1,272 plus fabric, Oficina Inglesa.

Everlasting flowers
Gerbera and rose bouquet, £14, John Lewis.

Bright accessory
Malachite plate, from £15, Ewa Bursztyka at Art Rookie.

Antiqued effect
Silver candlestick holder, 17.5cm (h), £5, Sophie Allport.

Spriggy floral
Kew Sage fabric, £29.50 per m, Ian Mankin.

Fresh spring green
Embroidered Country Sprig cushion, £16, Next.

Gustav Trophy wallpaper (circa 1875), £71 per roll, from the Archive Trails collection; frame painted in Grey Moss 234 Absolute Matt emulsion; wall painted in Linen Wash 33 Absolute Matt emulsion; both £38 for 2.5 ltrs; all Little Greene.

For stockists turn to page 112

Create a feature wall

Wallace Secret Garden wallpaper in Orchard, £115 per roll; chair in Wallace Secret Garden in Green Gauze, £85 per m; throw, £280; cushion, £135; all Liberty Fabrics.

Elegant china

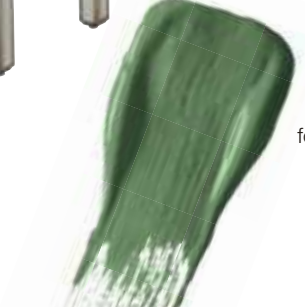
Shibori and Heron dinnerware, from £10; all Christiane Lemieux at House of Fraser.

Quirky detail

Green parrot ornament, £15, The Contemporary Home.

Deco styling

Claridge mirrored console table, 90 (h) x 135.5 (w) x 42cm (d), £702, Artisanti.



Bright accent

Sherwood silk emulsion, £13.94 for 2.5 ltrs, Colours at B&Q.

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Style advice

Try training a quince tree to ramble up the front of your home. The one trailing over the porch of this house provides the owners with enough fruit to make jams and jellies.

Turn to page 44 to see inside this picturesque home.

The owners of this cottage in Surrey adore entertaining and love to eat outdoors at every opportunity. The table and chairs dating back to the Fifties were bought from Kempton Park Antiques Market and orginally came from Belgium.

The kitchen is an honest, practical space with a steel work surface put in by a local craftsman. The legs supporting it are improvised from a ship's mast, scavenged locally. Lights with old-style twisted flexes are from Heritage Lighting (01274 473400, www.heritagelighting.org), a company that supplies lighting for period dramas and advertisements.

Get the look p35

WILD AT HEART

A small house in Hastings, like much of the town, had a slightly seedy past that has now been swept away by its arty new occupants

FEATURE LAURIS MORGAN-GRIFFITHS/NARRATIVES
PHOTOGRAPHY CLAIRE RICHARDSON/NARRATIVES

Key facts

THE OWNERS Stylist Leida Nassir-Pour lives here with her partner Will Evans, a writer. **THE PROPERTY** A former pub in Hastings, dating back to the early 1800s, which was converted into a two-bedroom home around 30 years ago. **DATE PURCHASED** 2010. **IMPROVEMENTS MADE** The house has been injected with early-20th-century style and filled with an eclectic mix of industrial and vintage finds.

'I sounded like an old fogey, and I didn't want to live in a place that was causing me to constantly complain'

Above and **opposite** 'The kitchen and dining room are the most evolved spaces because they're where we spend most time,' Leida says. The table is made of teak tree root, which is full of cracks and holes. 'I love the fact that people cannot resist stroking the table and poking their fingers into the holes.' The previous French farmhouse chairs broke, so the sturdy Indian teak stools were bought to last. The curtains are made up of three old fabrics, one of them a German hop sack.

It was the energy and the sense of potential that stylist Leida Nassir-Pour had always loved about Brighton. Originally from nearby Lewes, she had moved to the coastal city after dropping out of art college in Huddersfield in 1998. But after 11 years, just as she was ready to buy a home of her own (until then she had rented), Leida realised she had been priced out of the market. 'The transition happened very fast,' she says. 'Suddenly there were no more empty buildings – it had all been done.' She wasn't sure she liked it, either. 'I was constantly saying things like, "Brighton used to be so this or so that". I sounded like an old fogey, and I didn't want to live in a place that was causing me to constantly complain.'

It was a day trip of flat-hunting in Hastings with her partner Will Evans that rekindled Leida's energy. She found Hastings suitably ungentrified, and describes the visit as 'a little like stepping into an episode of *The Sweeney* in 1977'. What they fell in love with was one-third of a former pub whose quirky conversion into a two-bedroom home meant it had received little attention from prospective buyers. 'The entrance is at the back, so you have to walk through the old pub courtyard to get into the house,' Leida says. 'It had put other potential buyers off, but we loved it.' Within six months they had made the move.

Thanks to a file handed over by the previous owners, Leida learned all about the building's >>

Style advice

Leida took down the wall that separated the staircase from the living room – a great way to create the maximum amount of space in a small room.

The chairs in the sitting room came from an estate sale and the lights are from a train station. For depth of colour, the floor was painted with three coats: first Oak Apple by Fired Earth (01295 814396, www.firedearth.com) and then two coats of Farrow & Ball's Skimming Stone (01202 876141, www.farrow-ball.com), mixed first with a natural ochre and then with black 'to dirty it up'.

3 of the best industrial pendants

1. Edison pendant in antique brass, £124.80, Limehouse 1900. **2.** Copper dome pendant, 31cm (dia), £99, Lime Lace **3.** Cult Living Stylo ribbed glass lamp, 30cm (dia), £59, Cult Furniture.

For stockists turn to page 112

'It's funny, but when we first viewed the house it had this energy, like it had seen some wild times'

chequered past. It was built in 1826 as two houses, although a new façade was soon added and the property turned into a pub. 'At the same time, it was also used as a trial house for small domestic cases,' she says. 'And at one point there were prostitutes upstairs. It's funny, but when we first viewed the house it had this energy, like it had seen some wild times.'

ECLECTIC MIX

Closing time for the pub was in the mid-Sixties, when it became an antiques shop; the conversion into three homes followed in the early 1980s. Although the pub's character had been obliterated by a lot of MDF, the original floors remained, albeit overed in black tar. 'Stripping them back was possibly the worst thing I've ever had to do in my life,' Leida says. 'We had sticky black sooty residue everywhere for three months.' With only a small budget for renovations, the couple did much of the work themselves. 'We were either killing ourselves or nearly killing each other.'

At the time she was still working at an interiors boutique in Brighton (she was also a freelance stylist, and bought and sold textiles and antiques at Brighton markets). 'Then I started waitressing in the restaurant across the road from the house,' she says. 'We needed the money for the refurbishment, and the less time I was in the house the better.' The work got done, however. And while there is little sign of the home having once been a pub, a certain turn-of-the-20th-century character has been reinstated. Rich, natural wood tones mix well with industrial fittings; vintage finds cleverly combine with artisan buys.

BRANCHING OUT

It is a look that Leida has also applied to the shop that she opened six months after arriving in Hastings. 'I saw a vacancy sign up >>

Opposite page An Ikea sofa has been given a new lease of life in the living room with grey linen upholstery. Walls are skimmed with a mix of limestone plaster and lime render (www.chalkdownlime.co.uk) to give an antique white finish. **Above left** The black and white tiles are from Morocco, where Leida goes to have the clothes and shoe designs made up for her shop. **Above right** The shower was created out of odd brass plumbing parts, while the rose was formed by punching holes in a piece of brass, which gives a fantastic spray 'like heavy rain'. The bath looks like enamel but is a resin reproduction found on the internet and painted in Farrow & Ball Off Black (01202 876141, www.farrow-ball.com).

'I had no idea what kind of shop I would open, or what I would stock, but I knew I had to do it'

in the restaurant I was working in and called the number. I had no idea what kind of shop I would open, or what I would stock, but I knew I just had to do it,' she says. Two weeks after signing the lease, she opened Warp & Weft Styling and filled it with her collected vintage and historic pieces and handmade items. The shop fit cost only £800. 'When I look back I have no idea how we did it,' she says. It has since evolved to include her own clothing designs, accessories and products for the home, which she has handmade in Morocco

The shop is not far from the house, which is on the city's prominent West Hill. 'The house is on a long street, and it's very different from one end to the other,' Leida says. 'At the top, it's all stylists and artists and it's very middle-class. At the other end it's a bit rundown and with some social housing. Ours is right in the middle, which reflects our social standing. But as with so much of Hastings, the street is changing and bit by bit other properties are being done up.'

What will Leida do if the evolution and regeneration of Hastings takes it the same way of the more genteel Brighton? 'What will I do?' she asks. 'I'll lap it up!'

• To find out more about Warp & Weft and Leida Nassir Pour's styling service, call 01424 437180 or visit www.warpandweftstyling.com.

This page and **opposite** Leida opened her shop Warp & Weft Styling in Hastings after moving to the town six years ago. It is filled with carefully curated garments, shoes and home products that she has specially handmade in Morocco. The quirky interior is furnished with her stylist's attention to detail and cost just £800 to fit out.

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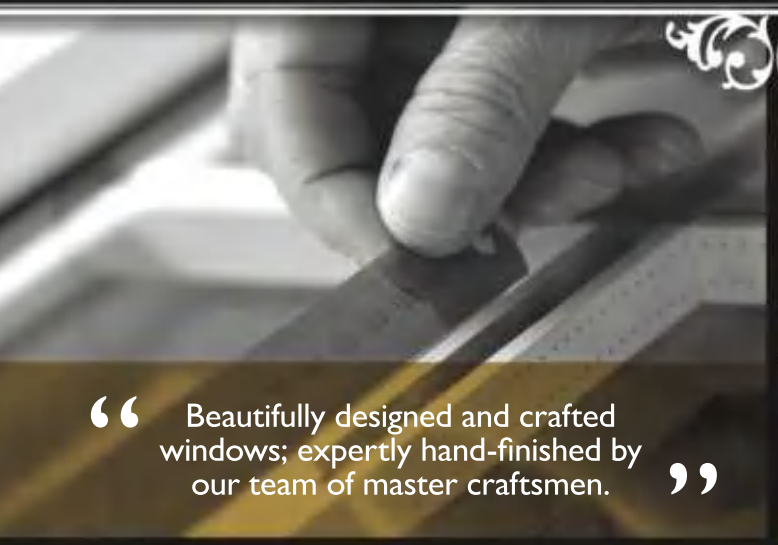

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Be inspired by Leida's style

GET THE LOOK

Copy the style of this industrial kitchen with rustic wood pieces and stainless steel accessories

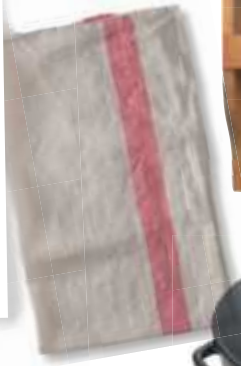
LED tinted Edison-style squirrel cage bulb, £24.99, Fritz Fryer.

Easy-to-use push-button controls

CLCH60SS-C stainless steel chimney cooker hood, 60 (w) x 47.3cm (d), £105, Cooke & Lewis at B&Q.

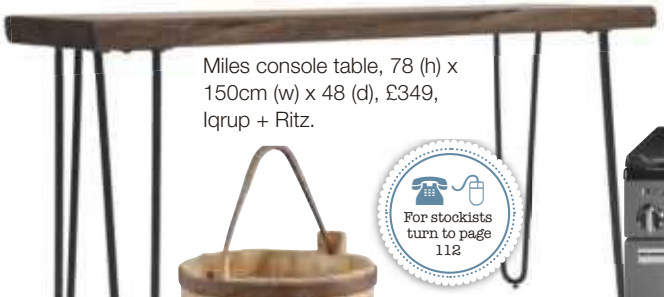
Hook and Hide mango wood unit, 55 (h) x 70 (w) x 20cm (d), £125, Within.

Red Arles linen hand towel, £14, The Linen Works.



Cast iron 4.5-ltr casserole dish, £40, Sainsbury's.

House Doctor bamboo ladder, 220cm (h), £49, Idyll Home.



Miles console table, 78 (h) x 150cm (w) x 48 (d), £349, Iqrup + Ritz.

For stockists turn to page 112

Cypress bucket with iron handle, 36 (h) x 35cm (dia), £125, Shimu.

Pro Deluxe 110 dual-fuel oven with two electric ovens and five gas burners, from £1,819, Rangemaster.

Reclaimed wood trays, 50cm (l) x 35 (w), £69.95 each, Nordic House.

FEATURE SOPHIE WARREN-SMITH

Get the look p43

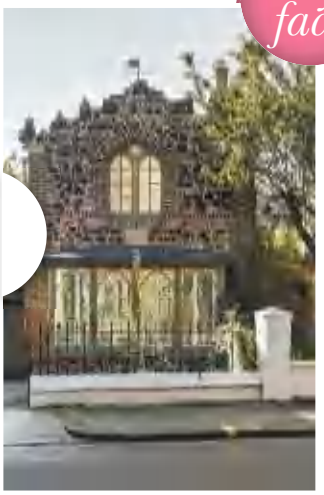
A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING

Vicky Rigby's uncluttered all-white decor gives this unique cottage a surprisingly spacious and calm interior

FEATURE CHARLOTTE METCALF **PHOTOGRAPHER** ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL

Vicky's custom-built all-white kitchen has been cleared of clutter so that the eye is drawn out to the pretty walled garden beyond. Tall cupboards house Vicky's books, office files and kitchen appliances, leaving an unencumbered space in which to eat and relax.

Key facts



THE OWNER Vicky Rigby, a project manager of domestic residential refurbishments, lives here. **THE PROPERTY** A detached cottage in London, circa 1838, consisting of sitting room, kitchen/diner, cloakroom, bedroom and bathroom. **PURCHASED** 2011. **IMPROVEMENTS MADE** The property was renovated from top to bottom, inside and out. Vicky paid particular attention to opening up and enlargening the floor space to bring light from the back of the house into the main sitting room at the front.

'It would have been cheaper to pull it down and start again, but I like feeling that I've nurtured and restored a house,' says Vicky Rigby of her historic London cottage, which recently earned her a Hammersmith Conservation Award. Vicky project manages domestic residential refurbishments from planning through to completion. She had finished working on two substantial properties for clients: one in Italy and one in central London, and wanted to turn her attention to a challenging project for herself.

'I spent months looking for the right property that would enable me to design and update it,' says Vicky. 'This listed detached building with flint quoins and brick cladding was just waiting to be transported into the 21st century, and came complete with a south-facing garden and enough frontage for parking. It's rare in London to find such a compact property that's detached, giving complete privacy. When I saw the huge potential for light, on top of its other advantages, I knew it was right for me.'

LABOUR OF LOVE

First, Vicky renewed the roof using Buckingham slate. Despite the difficulty, the concrete mortar >>

Left and **far left** The Eames chairs around the table are from Atomic in Vicky's home town of Nottingham (0115 965 7920, www.atomicinteriors.co.uk). The work surface is Arenastone from Mole Valley Masonry in Surrey (01293 863845, www.molevalleymasonry.co.uk). Vicky designed the island to face the dining table so she can chat to friends while she prepares food. A glass door leads into a courtyard where Vicky grows herbs in pots. An antique mirror adds a theatrical touch.

Style advice

Before decorating, always place furniture onto a scale plan so that you know if you need to move radiators to accommodate your favourite sofa.

was then removed from the flint quoins and brick cladding and painstakingly replaced with lime mortar, more in keeping with the period of the property. 'It was a labour of love that required expertise and patience,' says Vicky. She then realigned the front railings and extended the gate, using granite sets and flint gravel to allow for drainage, softening the area by planting a small flower meadow. All the windows were also replaced.

OUT WITH THE OLD

'The interior was dark with poor-quality fittings dating back to the Sixties,' says Vicky. On the ground floor, she took out a redundant second fireplace and pulled down the existing porch and back extension and replaced the roof to the front bay with a shallower design.

Vicky also took out the existing reproduction spiral staircase and installed a more substantial design to the back of the living room, and built a large extension with glazed bi-fold doors to

This page and **opposite** Vicky's pale, natural colour scheme allows the rooms to flow into one another. Oatmeal carpet in the living room merges effortlessly with limestone flooring in the kitchen. Vicky chose a narrow Bestå Burs desk from Ikea (www.ikea.com) so as not to obstruct the flow between the kitchen and the sitting room. She had wanted a real fire but opted instead for the Nu-Flame Fireboxx gas fire (www.nu-flame.co.uk) to give instant warmth. She designed the log base to the fireplace herself using Buckingham slate left over from the roof, with shelves built around it to display treasures from her travels to Asia and South America.

3 of the best circular mirrors

1 2 3

1. Blaydes mirror in pale mocha, 68cm (dia), £165, The Chandelier & Mirror Company **2.** Wilton cream porthole mirror, 90cm (dia), £147.50, One World Trading Co **3.** Lille ornate mirror with distressed finish, 80cm (dia), £196, Around The House Furniture.

For stockists turn to page 112

the garden. 'The existing walls were replastered to match the new to give clean, sleek lines – 26 skips later the floors were levelled and all utilities renewed and hidden,' she says.

TRANQUIL ORDER

The kitchen neatly demonstrates Vicky's desire to conceal 'ugly household appliances' and to keep clutter hidden away. The island has a thick slab of composite stone inset with a sink and a three-ring hob installed flush with the surface. To add interest, Vicky has hung a map of the world on the wall and arranged a few fascinating treasures from her travels – carved mango wood gourds from Bangkok's night market, boxes from Myanmar, sculpture from Brazil, pottery from Tuscany. Paradoxically, her restrained approach to decor gives her home an idiosyncratic sense of tranquil order that soothes more than the lavish confusion of more cluttered homes.

The living room has been given the same pared-back treatment. 'I added elements of softness to the streamlined seating and designed shelving to display my curiosities,' explains Vicky. Texture has been introduced to add warmth, in the form of a fluffy throw, a slubby linen cushion and a thick-pile rug, while colour has been used sparingly, keeping the integrity of the house's creamy calm. Table lamps rather than overhead lighting provide depth to the white walls.

A generous wide staircase leads to the first-floor bedroom where light falls in from the >>

'I like things to be both practical and decorative. I create a perfect shell first and then add to it'

windows on three sides and reflects to the raftered ceiling. 'I like a free environment and the house was designed for me to live in, hence the freestanding bath in the bedroom, like a hotel room, and the shower wet room, although there is provision for a glazed partition to be added at a later date, if required,' says Vicky.

Built-in wardrobes conceal personal belongings so the big unencumbered bed, simply decked out in cream, unfussy white and taupe linen, looks all the more inviting. 'My mother always asked, "Can it be ornamental and useful?" and I think that's why having a place for everything is my big thing,' says Vicky. 'I like things to be both practical and decorative. I create a perfect shell first and then add to it with carefully chosen accessories. Other than the furniture, everything in this building is new so style and quality trump speed and economy.'

PRIVATE PROPERTY

To complete the cloistered and private feel of the property, two Victorian walls from mellow reclaimed brick replaced fencing in the garden, while York stone, removed from the front and mixed with brick, was laid on the ground to provide a place for a table and chairs. Raised beds for planting finish the design. Vicky used her dedicated small team and known sub-contractors throughout the build.

'My home is open-plan and minimal, so it's vital that warmth, cosiness and good lighting are all available at the touch of a button,' she says. 'In the impatient, hectic world we live in, we all need comfort on demand.

Above left and **left** Vicky opened up the ceiling and painted the beams white to give a sense of height and space to her bedroom and bathroom. Simple lamps and bedside shelves from Ikea (www.ikea.com) keep the space uncluttered and calm. Her taps, basin and shower are from Nu-Line (www.nulinebathrooms.com) and her Amalfi volcanic limestone bath is from Victoria + Albert (01952 221100, www.vandabaths.com). The mirror over the basin was made to echo the unusual windows.

Be inspired by Vicky's style

GET THE LOOK

Combine sleek accessories with designer pieces to recreate this streamlined, contemporary kitchen

Morphy Richards cream five-piece knife block, £34.99, Very.

White Eames moulded wire dining chair, available in various colours, £49, Danetti.

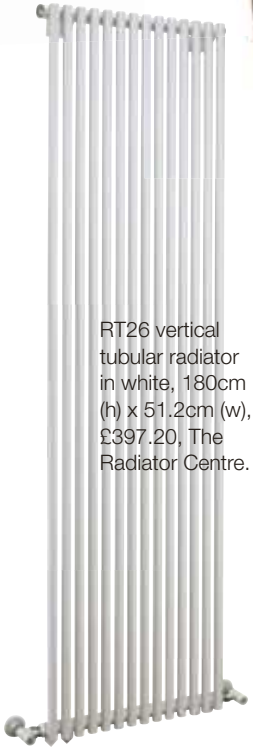
Homer extending table made from solid reclaimed fir, 76 (h) x 160-210 (w) x 95cm (d), £695, Loaf.

Wire buffalo skull in bronze with resin horns, 40 (h) x 49 (w) x 27cm (d), £39, Cult Furniture.

Rattan nested serving trays, largest size 60 (w) x 40cm (d), £195, Oka.

Double-walled insulation to help retain the heat

Arne Jacobsen 1.5-ltr coffee pot in stainless steel with a satin finish, 20cm (h), £209, Black by Design.



RT26 vertical tubular radiator in white, 180cm (h) x 51.2cm (w), £397.20, The Radiator Centre.

DUSF636X Classic multifunction double oven in stainless steel, 71.3 (h) x 59.7 (w) x 57cm (d), £805, Smeg.

For stockists turn to page 112

Cathedral limestone in Antique, 20 (w) x 40cm (d), £144.90 per sq m, Fired Earth.

Walnut Marvin vintage-style linen crate, 20 (h) x 32 (w) x 50cm (d), £79, Lilly Loray.

FEATURE SOPHIE WARREN-SMITH

Get the look p53

Alexe spotted this island unit in a sale at Ikea, and matched it with simple white Abstrakt units, also from Ikea (www.ikea.com). As well as solving their storage problems, it also provides a sociable spot to sit and chat.

FAMILY VALUES

Alexe Phipps-Inglis and her brother Stuart threw in their lot together to renovate their dream cottage in the Surrey countryside

FEATURE STEPHANIE SMITH/GAP INTERIORS
PHOTOGRAPHER COLIN POOLE/GAP INTERIORS

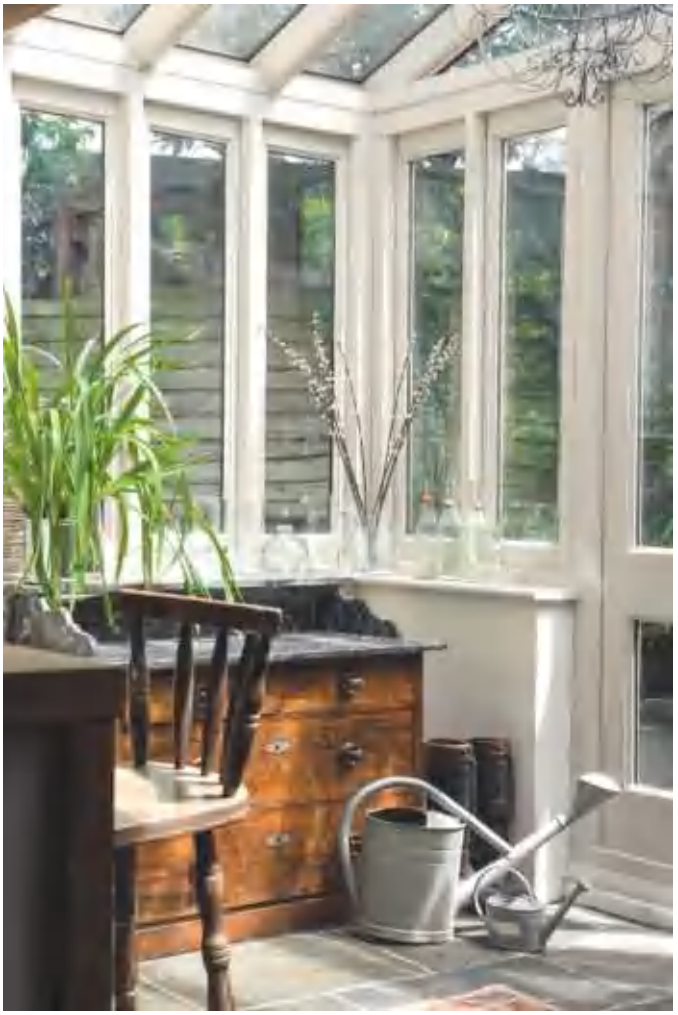
After living in Spain for 12 years, Alexe Phipps-Inglis knew she had to find the right house when she came back to live in the Surrey countryside. 'I returned to England when my relationship broke up and stayed with a friend in Cranleigh, Surrey, an area I knew and loved. It feels like you're in the countryside, but you've got a vibrant village, plus easy links to both Guildford and London for shopping and work.'

Completely coincidentally, her brother Stuart was also going through a divorce and living in a flat not far away in Thames Ditton, but had always wanted a country cottage. 'It made sense for us to move in somewhere together'. says Alexe. 'We're >>

Key facts

THE OWNERS Alexe Phipps-Inglis, an interior designer, and her brother, Stuart, a supermarket manager. **THE PROPERTY** A three-bedroomed cottage in Surrey with the central part dating back to 1554. Additions in the 1700s and 1970s complete the house. **DATE PURCHASED** 2009. **IMPROVEMENTS MADE** Flooring was replaced, additional storage added to the kitchen and walls painted in a uniform shade of off-white.

RAYBURN
RAYBURN



'You need to spend money where it's important – good-quality flooring, carpets and paint all show'

a close family, and we've both got children and grandchildren living locally, plus we're both very sociable and we love to entertain. It was a bit of a risk, but one we were both prepared to take – it was just a case of finding the right house to suit us both.'

COMING UP TRUMPS

Stuart started researching property websites, and came up trumps almost immediately. 'He'd always wanted something old and detached with an open fireplace, and he found a property fitting the bill on Rightmove. I went to see it on my own in February 2009 and I said straightaway to the estate agent that we would have it. Even though Stuart hadn't seen the inside, I knew it was perfect.'

With the recession hitting, the house had originally been on the market for £450,000, but had already dropped to £395,000 and the owners were happy to accept £365,000. However, wrangles with the sale of a flat owned by Stuart, with buyers dropping out twice, meant that Alexe and Stuart didn't actually get to move in until the October, eight months after they'd first seen it.

The house had been used as a holiday home and was decorated to an excellent standard, but it was not to Alexe and Stuart's taste. 'It's what's called a two-bay hall house, and it has been designated a place of historical interest,' explains Alexe. 'The central part dates back to 1554, which houses the dining space, my bedroom and the bathroom. The left wing, which now contains the sitting room and Stuart's bedroom, was added 200 years later, and the kitchen, conservatory and third bedroom is an extension that was done sympathetically in the 1970s, using old beams to mirror the originals.' Having checked that >>

Opposite page 'Having always had an Aga, I was interested to see what the Rayburn was like, but I've found that I prefer it, and it's always warm,' says Alexe. The walls are painted in Skimming Stone by Farrow & Ball (01202 876141, www.farrow-ball.com). **Above left** Keeping the old butler sink and taps that were already there, Alexe has added a personal touch by customising a pair of inexpensive curtains with checked fabric. **Above** Alexe toned down the orangey pine of the conservatory in a calm off-white shade.

Above The main room of the original 16th-century cottage makes a great dining room for keen entertainers Alexe and Stuart. The table was bought at auction and painted in Old White by Farrow & Ball. The linen chair covers are from Packhouse (01252 781010, www.packhouse.com).
Opposite page The side table was a piece that Alexe swapped with a designer friend for something that didn't suit the proportions of the house. The white jugs and lamps came from Bone Interiors (01483 277855, www.boneinteriors.com).

'I must have gone through at least nine tester pots before finding a shade to paint the downstairs rooms'

all the beams had been treated and everything was in order, it was a case of deciding what the cottage would look like.

BARGAIN HUNTER

'Stuart totally trusts my taste – after all, this is what I do for a living. I hate the words interior designer, it's more about getting the right look for a person at an affordable price. You need to spend the money where it's important – good-quality flooring, carpets and paint all show. I adore Farrow & Ball paints. People say you can have them copied but it's never the same, particularly in old houses. It's furniture that I can't understand people spending so much money on. It's much better to buy an individual piece and customise it,' says Alexe.

The first decision was to replace the flooring in the sitting room. 'It was so warped it was rising up in peaks, so we went for lovely wide solid oak planks and had them limed so they looked as though they'd been there a while.'

With brightly coloured washes on the walls, Alexe was keen to go to a more neutral look and also painted the orangey pine of the conservatory a calming mauvey-white. But deciding to paint the whole of the downstairs one off-white shade wasn't as easy as it sounds. 'I must have gone through testers of at least nine shades before finding the right one. The light in every single room here is different and it changes throughout the day, so I had to pick a colour that looked good all the time and lightened everything up, as it could be a dark space with all that wood, says Alexe.

With a trusty Rayburn stove already installed, Alexe's only problem in the kitchen was storage. 'There weren't really any units as everything was freestanding. We had a tight budget for renovation, but I found the wooden-topped island in a sale corner at Ikea for £45, and even with all the units fitted inside, it only came >>

'There are always friends and family here, and small children running round – it's a really happy house'

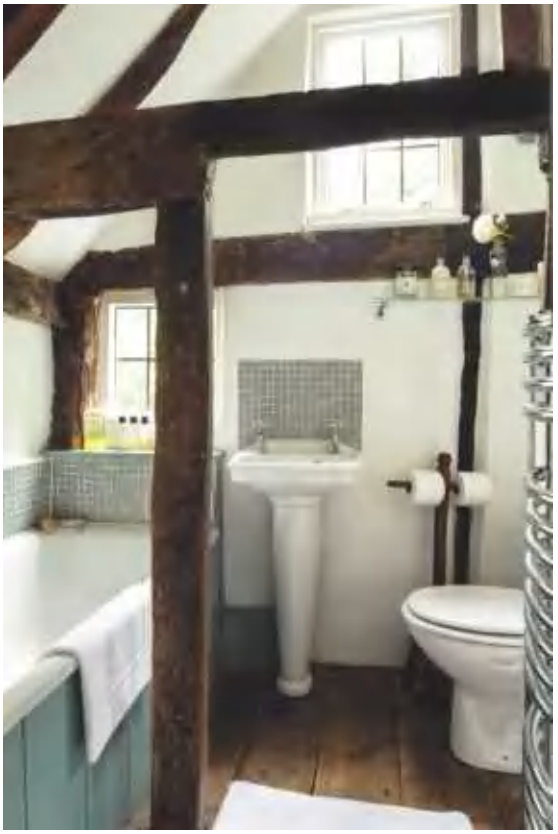
to £600, and it has everything we need.' But it was the large dining table that was Alexe's best bargain. 'I saw the huge but hideous shiny reproduction table in an auction with eight chairs. I managed to get it for only £40, gave the chairs away to a charity shop and then worked on painting the table. I originally wanted it to be magenta, but it came out a strange Barbie pink, so another eight coats later of Farrow & Ball's Old White and it was finally ready. Each of the linen-covered chairs cost more than the whole table but I think they work really well together,' she says.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The garden is a particular feature of the property, with an enclosed space that makes it totally private. It got plenty of attention in 2011, with three chickens in a smartly painted house and Stuart setting up his long-desired vegetable plot, growing everything from tomatoes to runner beans, all of which are used straightaway. 'We both cook,' explains Alexe. 'Stuart is big on barbecues and roasts while I cover everything else. It's lovely to be able to use things from your own garden.'

Next it was the upstairs where the attention was lavished. 'We've done both Stuart's bedroom and my bedroom, putting down a luxurious rattan-style carpet with wool in his room and having built-in cupboards made, as well as renovating the bathroom. Long-term we'd like a new bathroom and we need to really work on the guest bedroom, but for now we're just enjoying the house.'

With everything from a quiet supper to lunch for 12 going on at least three times a week, there's never a dull moment at this charming family-focused cottage. 'There are always friends here, small children running around and cosy chats in front of the fire. It's a really happy house.'



Opposite There's usually a real fire going in the cosy living room. Alexe and Stuart found the grate and the fireback at Architectural Salvage Sussex (01243 774025, www.architecturalsalvagesussex.co.uk). **Above left** With space at a premium, Alexe earmarked the stairs as the perfect place for bookcases. The striped runner came from Village Carpets & Flooring (01483 277261, www.village-carpets.co.uk). **Above right** Alexe kept the existing sanitaryware as it was good quality, and painted the bath panel in Dix Blue by Farrow & Ball. **Left** Cool linens from The White Company accentuate Stuart's stately bedroom. For similar striped linen cushions, contact Oka Interior Design Service (01235 433948).

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Be inspired by Alexe's style

GET THE LOOK

Team traditional elements with French-style pieces for a rustic country-style kitchen

Vanilla glass wall cabinet, 76 (h) x 44.5 (w) x 18.5cm (d), £105.95, Melody Maison.

King's Cross wall clock with a solid wood case, 50cm (dia), £139, Barker and Stonehouse.

Dassie Maison oak paddle board, 55 (w) x 13cm (d), £28, Amara.

Chichester freestanding island painted in Limestone, 92 (h) x 82 (w) x 142cm (d), from £2,275, Neptune.

Cream Essentials stove-top kettle, £15.99, BHS.

For stockists turn to page 112

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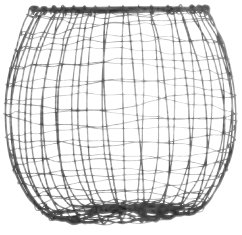
Grey riven slate tile, from £16.28 per sq m, Mandarin Stone.

Black mesh basket, 24 (h) x 26cm (w), £32, At No67.



Three-oven dual-control Aga in cream, 91.3 (h) x 98.7 (w) x 69.8cm (d), £10,295, Aga Living.

Canteen aged industrial wooden bar stool, 110 (h) x 37 (w) x 40cm (d), £140, Alexander & Pearl.

FEATURE SOPHIE WARREN-SMITH

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Get the look p61

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

An East Sussex house, once in bedsits and now restored to its former glory, has captured the hearts of its owners, Siobhan O'Leary and Jim Ashcroft

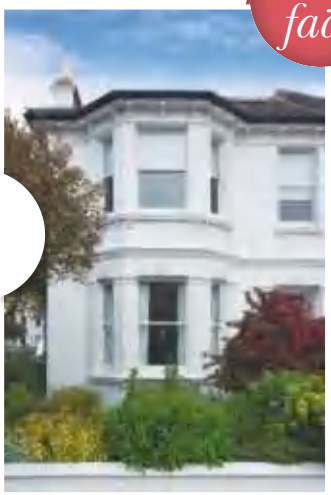
FEATURE AILEEN O'BRIEN **PHOTOGRAPHER** RICHARD GADSBY

'We realised we would want to change any house we bought to suit our taste, and this one had loads of potential'

Having decided to swap London for a more relaxed family life by the sea, Siobhan O'Leary was clear about one thing: she did not want another project. 'We had previously done up two houses and this time we just wanted to move in and start living,' says Siobhan. So her heart didn't exactly leap for joy when she and her husband Jim first viewed a semi-detached house in Hove. 'We really didn't like it,' she says. 'The owner had divided it all up, creating a flat downstairs for herself, while upstairs had been carved into bedsits with a shared kitchen. It needed a lot of work.'

But after seeing other properties in the area, the couple began to see its creative possibilities. 'We realised we would want to change any house we bought to suit our taste, even one that had been done up, and this had loads of potential,' says Siobhan. 'It was also the biggest Victorian house close to the sea we could afford.' It was >>

Key facts



THE OWNERS Jewellery maker Siobhan O'Leary lives here with Jim Ashcroft, a lighting cameraman, along with their daughter Molly, son Frank and dog Paddy.
THE PROPERTY A five-bedroom Victorian semi in Hove, East Sussex, built around 1890.
DATE PURCHASED 2005.
IMPROVEMENTS MADE The property had previously been carved up into bedsits, so Siobhan and Jim had their work cut out knocking down walls and converting it back into a spacious family home.

This page and **previous page** The much-loved antique table is at the heart of the airy, light-filled kitchen. 'We found it at auction and it's one of the only things in the house we were brave enough to spend proper money on,' says Siobhan. The cabinets from Border County Kitchens (01633 860858, www.bordercounty.co.uk) and the walls are both painted in Slipper Satin by Farrow & Ball (01202 876141, www.farrow-ball.com).

Home truth

'We did most of the decorating ourselves, but when we did get professionals in, they made all the difference to the quality of the finish.'

The lounge blends retro chic with classic Victorian features. Siobhan's much-loved vintage table lamp was a gift from Jim 16 years ago. 'It was one of the first interesting things that we ever bought and it really sets off the room,' she says.

'Having done up houses before we knew what to expect, but it's always the dust that gets to you'

late September 2005 when Siobhan and Jim moved in, along with Molly, then aged nine, and six-year-old Frank. And the first priority was to convert it back to a whole house. 'Everything was gutted: the kitchen upstairs, the extra bits of corridor and partition walls, and we put doorways back to their original position,' explains Siobhan. During this time the family camped out in one room. 'Having done up houses before we knew what to expect. But it's always the same thing that really gets to you: it's not the chaos or lack of a kitchen, it's the dust.'

HIDDEN TREASURES

The upheaval did, however, uncover some treasures. 'When we took down stud walls, we found lovely original features,' explains Siobhan. 'For example, the nice old stair bannister was still there; we just had to add the turned spindles, which a carpenter made for us.'

Having returned the house to its original layout and updated the bathroom, Siobhan and Jim did most of the decorating themselves. 'We sold our house in London for the same price we bought this one, so we didn't have a pot of money to spend,' says Siobhan. 'We also knew we couldn't do everything at once.' They waited another six months before tackling the kitchen. 'We wanted to spend money on it because it would be our main room. It cost around £30,000, which was mainly the building work rather than the kitchen cabinets, which are made from MDF and not expensive. We also had to have the foundations strengthened to support the new window we put in. '

Demolishing the old kitchen, a downstairs bathroom and study area, they created one big kitchen-dining space and added a large >>

Above left Siobhan picked up her glass collection at car-boot sales, vintage shops and online, while the sideboard was from eBay and the painting is by her friend, artist Paul Becker (www.paulbecker.org.uk). The metallic Sixties lamp was bought when Siobhan used to run a vintage light shop. The walls are painted in Card Room Green by Farrow & Ball (01202 876141, www.farrow-ball.com). **Above right** The study features some of Siobhan's retro finds, such as a filing cabinet and colourful old prints bought from vintage shops in Brighton. The hostess trolley was an eBay find and the lamp came from Spitalfields market.

Above left An all-white colour scheme brings serene simplicity to Jim and Siobhan's bedroom. 'We painted the floorboards so everything was one colour,' says Siobhan. She found the Laura Ashley bed and Tintin print on eBay, while the table lamp and red central light shade were bought when Siobhan ran her vintage light shop. **Above right** An old medical cabinet and glass dome, both bought online, make the perfect display cases for Siobhan's jewellery. The framed prints were eBay bargains.

'Previously we would do up a house and move on – I'm not sure we even put up pictures in our last one'

bay window where there had once been an outside toilet. Siobhan had a lot of input into the design of her Shaker-style kitchen, which was made by Welsh company Border County Kitchens. 'I kept emailing pictures of what I wanted,' says Siobhan. 'I was keen to create the illusion it was a hand-built kitchen, with design details such as sitting the doors in the frame of the cupboards.' She was delighted with the results. 'It's exactly how I had pictured it. I spend a lot of time in there, making my jewellery, and it's a lovely, light-filled room.'

RETURN TO GLORY

When it came to styling, there was definitely a retro theme. 'Jim likes shabby-chic, vintage things and I love Sixties and Seventies pieces, so there's a bit of everything we've collected over the years. We have never spent a lot on furniture but we do have some good vintage lights because we used to have a shop that sold them. I always think an interesting lamp will stand out a lot more than a fancy sofa.'

Once the floors were sanded in 2010, all the major work was completed and the house now features two large reception rooms and a kitchen-diner downstairs, while upstairs has three good-sized bedrooms, including a loft room, a guest room and a dressing room. With the house now returned to its old self, all that's left to do is enjoy it. 'Previously, we would do up a house and move on. I'm not sure we even put up pictures in our last one,' says Siobhan. 'This is the longest we've lived anywhere and it's really homely, as though we've put down roots.'

For more information on Siobhan's jewellery, visit hoitytoityjewellery.bigcartel.com or call her on 07932 355638.

Be inspired by Siobhan's style

GET THE LOOK

Take inspiration from this Shaker-style kitchen with rustic furniture and nostalgic finds

Black metal Electric clock, 37cm (dia), £125, Newgate Clocks.

Cucina Belgravia dual-lever mixer tap in chrome, £245, Crosswater.

Ercol Originals chairmakers chair, £592, Furniture Village.

Healthy Poultry Fresh Eggs print, 51 (h) x 51cm (w), £72.99, Art.co.uk.

Villeroy & Boch ceramic double-bowl sink, 22 (h) x 80 (w) x 50cm (d), £399, Neptune.

Gingham table runner, 50 (w) x 150cm (l), £22, Nordic House.

New Frontier extending table, 78.5 (h) x 150-200 (w) x 100cm (d), £715, Barker and Stonehouse.

For stockists turn to page 112

Distressed finish for an authentic rustic feel

Living Nostalgia cream bread bin, £29.95, Kitchen Craft.

Faux Garden Flower mix in a large jug, 30cm (h), £49, Peony.

Textured Black Oak Oiled solid hardwood planks, £119 per sq m, Junckers.

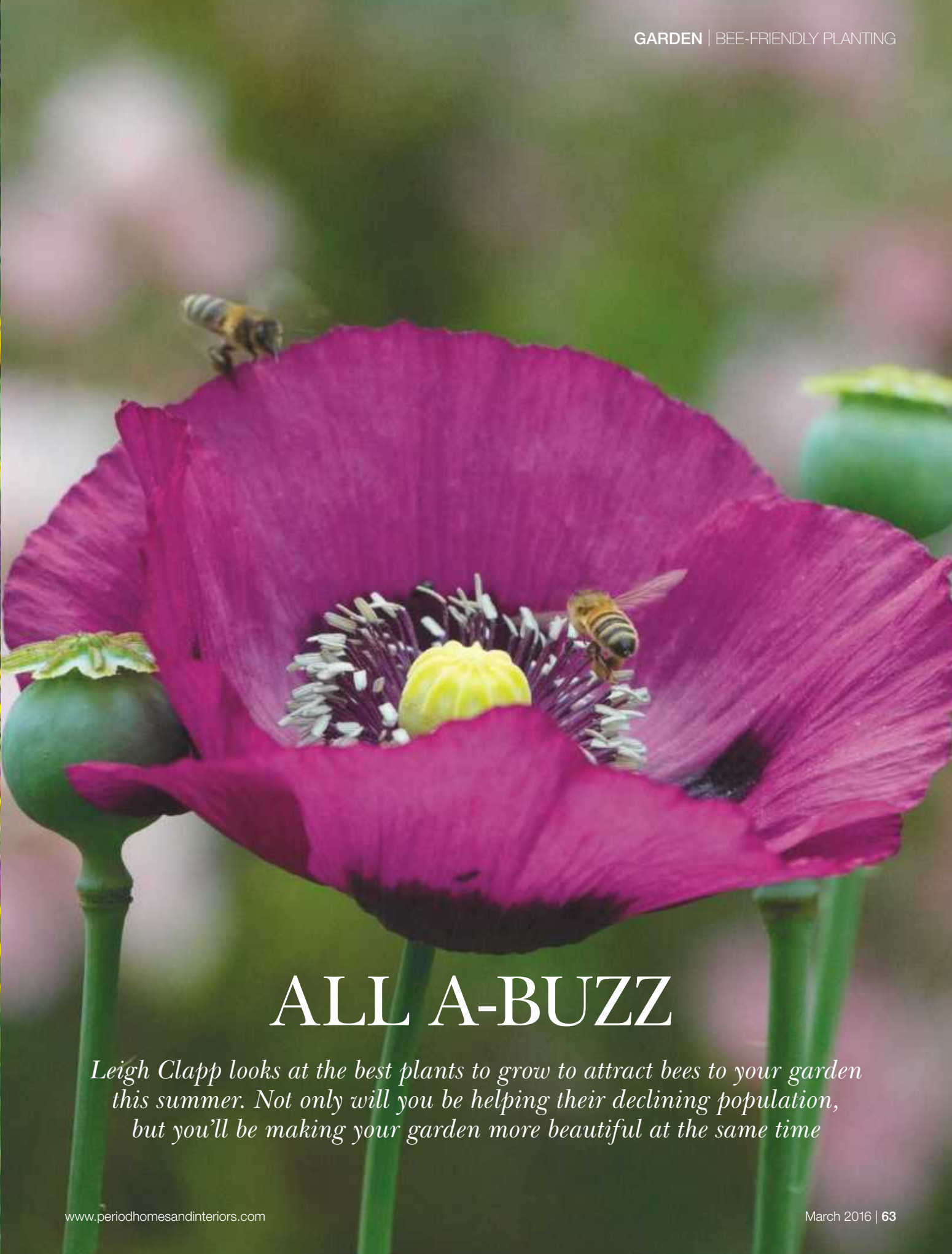
Girasol jug, set of three different sizes, £45, Loaf.

FEATURE SOPHIE WARREN-SMITH

This page Plant in generous clumps with long-flowering blooms such as achillea, geraniums and salvias. **Opposite page** Poppies are clearly a favourite with bees, laden with pollen and easy to access

Bee-friendly plants

• **Small trees** – prunus, malus, pyrus, ornamental almond, salix, witch hazel, hawthorn, Judas tree.
• **Shrubs** – lonicera, quince, cornus, ceanothus, forsythia, lilac, broom, viburnum, buddleia, berberis, mahonia, abelia, myrtle, shrub roses, rosemary, lavender, wigelia, rock rose, hebes, philadelphus, potentilla, hypericum, choisya.
• **Annuals and perennials** – eryngium, salvia, sedum, allium, echinops, cosmos, foxglove, delphinium, aster, zinnia, geum, nepeta, geranium, poppies, campanula, kniphofia, lavatera, Japanese anemone, violet, hollyhock, achillea, centaurea, verbascum, dianthus, lychnis, monarda, verbena, echium, daisy, marigold.
• **Herbs** – borage, thyme, hyssop, chives, origanum, mint, comfrey, chamomile.
• **Hedging plants** – cherry laurel, hawthorn, pyracantha, Portuguese laurel, holly, cotoneaster.
• **Early blooms** – hellebore, crocus, snowdrop, winter aconite, hyacinth, heather.
• **British wildflowers** – corn-cockle, cornflower, teasel, wild parsnip, viper's bugloss, evening primrose, cowslip, scabious, corn poppy, clover.



ALL A-BUZZ

Leigh Clapp looks at the best plants to grow to attract bees to your garden this summer. Not only will you be helping their declining population, but you'll be making your garden more beautiful at the same time

Top tips

• Replace some of your lawn with flowering plants – or plant it as a meadow area. • Plant some British wildflowers. • Observe the plants bees particularly enjoy in the local area and replicate these at home. • Avoid double or multi-petalled flowers as they may lack pollen and nectar and be difficult for bees to access.

'What fascinates me is the hierarchy within the hive, with each bee progressing through a series of jobs'

Bees are vital for plant pollination. What's more, it's estimated that 80% of the Western diet is dependant on bee pollination. Yet the loss of flower-rich habitats means the bee population is in decline, so it is important that we do what we can to help their survival. Even if you can't keep honeybees yourself, you can grow some bee-friendly plants in your garden. In return an abundance of pollinators will ensure your garden plants and crops continue to flourish.

There are lots of things we can do to encourage bees to our garden. Bees focus their pollen collecting in the local area to the hive, returning to the same source until it is depleted, so it's important to plan for a succession of choices from early spring to late autumn. Adding the right plants is easy once you understand what they need. In a nutshell, think long-flowering, open flowers and old-fashioned cottage plants.

BEE IDENTIFICATION

There are hundreds of species of bees in Britain, and they can be divided into three groups. There are 24 species of bumblebees, around 225 types of solitary bee and just a single honeybee species.

- Honeybees are social creatures, living in colonies or hives of up to 60,000, with one single fertile female (the queen bee) that lives for three to four years, lays the eggs and maintains the social cohesion. There are several hundred male honeybees (drones), but most of the hive is made up of thousands of infertile female worker bees whose job it is to gather nectar and pollen, care for the larvae, build the honeycomb and defend the hive. Most honeybees are looked after by beekeepers, but there are also some wild honeybee colonies.
- Bumblebees look quite different from honeybees and solitary bees. The most reliable difference is that bumblebees are usually larger, and are always covered with dense hair. The sight of these plump, furry creatures buzzing from flower to flower is one of summer's joys. They live in nests with 50 to 400 bees, often using tunnels made by rodents. Unlike honeybees, they only make small amounts of a honey-like substance to eat themselves. The queen lives for a year, while the others only live a few months. By September the nest is in decline and the bees are dying. Where honeybees overwinter by feeding on their honey stores, only the queen hibernates, burrowing into the soil and emerging on sunny spring days. Occasionally she may pop out and forage on a warm winter's day, so include some winter flowers in your garden.
- Solitary bees don't have a worker caste. Instead each female constructs and provisions her own nest, dying before the next generation emerges. Soil-nesting species excavate nest tunnels, while others nest in hollow stems, beetle borings in dead wood or soft rotten wood. You make like to make or buy bee houses for them. February to March is the best time for putting solitary bee homes in the garden. Ensure the bee house has an overhanging roof and is waterproof, as the overwintering bees need to be cold but dry.

KEEPING BEES

If you would like to keep bees, learning from other established garden owners is invaluable. Penny Snell, the London County Organiser and past Chairman for the National Gardens Scheme, has hives in her glorious Surrey garden at Moleshill House. 'I initially introduced bees for the benefit of my garden,' she explains. 'At first I kept them in skeps [hives made of straw or wicker] but that became a little impractical as it's difficult to extract the honey, so I moved >>

Clockwise from top left Delight in the sight of busy bumblebees; stately foxgloves will happily self-seed; transform an area of lawn into a meadow billowing with poppies and daisies; think about providing a larder through summer into autumn with salvias, sedums and yarrow; did you know that the herb monarda flavours Earl Grey tea? For bees it's a magnet with its pollen and nectar, and unsurprisingly it's also known as bee balm; pretty mauve campanula are another good choice; bee hives are set in a corner of Penny Snell's garden, along with traditional skeps in the recessed alcoves, used for collecting swarms.

PHOTOGRAPHY LEIGH CLAPP

Left Who could resist the stunning blue Meconopsis poppies? **Above** Beehives are nestled under old apple trees at the Old Thatch.

'I love to see them going about their tasks without any bother. Oh that the human race could manage so well'

them to conventional hives and now just use the skeps when collecting swarms. I spend hours watching and marvelling at my bees going about their business – they are incredibly industrious and clever. They work as a community and it is incredibly inspiring to witness.

'When I collect their honey I always leave half of it for the bees because I find they seem to remain healthier with their own provisions rather than being fed syrup for the winter.' she explains. 'I leave enough on each hive to see them through the winter.' However, for all the obvious pleasures and benefits of keeping bees, Penny is also at pains to stress that it is a time-consuming pastime and shouldn't be undertaken by people who are likely to go away a lot in the summer months – they need attention.

Jillian Ede gardens around her chocolate-box cottage, Old Thatch, in the Hampshire countryside, and is equally enthusiastic about her little charges. 'I love to see "the girls" busily going about their tasks and being part of a community without any fuss or bother. Oh that the human race could manage so well! I love to see them drink from the natural spring water in my garden, which seeps out at the base of an old stone wall. I site their entrance boards so they fly away from the cottage. They have never been a problem on my National Gardens Scheme open days: a few "Bees at work" signs alerts visitors to their presence. I like to position a chair beneath the fruit trees so that I can admire them working on while I sneak a coffee break.'

Further advice comes from beekeeper and keen gardener Jeanette Lerwill from her Kent acreage that is full of bloom, including a delightful potager of flower and produce combined. 'What fascinates me most about bees is the hierarchy within the hive. They each progress through a series of jobs, from cleaning, nursing young and guarding the entrance to the very important job of taking flight as a forager. Having bees in the garden is a joy.'

• For further information about keeping bees in your garden, contact the British Beekeepers Association on www.bbka.org.uk.

MARCH

In the garden

This month: creating planting schemes, feeding and mulching, and sowing hardy annuals

Leigh Clapp, *Period Homes & Interiors* gardening expert

It's so refreshing to get out into the garden in springtime, when the air is filled with sweet fragrances and on all sides are emerging flowers and young, newly unfurled leaves. Golden daffodils are peering out at every corner, backed by the astringent lime-greens of new growth and the deeper tones of dense evergreens. With spring's energy new and fresh, it's an excellent time to plant, spring clean your garden and take inspiration from visiting gardens to create new planting schemes of your own. The increased warmth means that you should deal with weeds as they come back into growth. Feeding and mulching the garden beds now will pay off with healthier plants. Take a good look around, then lift and divide any overgrown clumps of perennials. The mowing regime gets back into routine this month as well.

Look ahead and plant deciduous trees and shrubs, hedges, container-grown herbaceous and rockery plants. Start sowing hardy annuals now until May; they are great to fill gaps as the season progresses and are the most cost-effective way to give you floral delights to look forward to. I like old-fashioned nigella billowing in borders as well as sunny California and Shirley poppies for bright accents. Plant summer bulbs and corms such as gladioli, dahlias and crocosmia. There are also new vegetables to start sowing, including leeks, carrots, peas, spinach and spring onions.

Enjoy freshly cut daffodils

I love to bring a bit of spring inside by picking some of my daffodils and narcissi. Rather than cutting the stems, it's best to snap them close to the ground to stop the toxic sap leaking out, which will shorten the life of any other flowers with them in the vase. Leave your daffodils in a jug of water for up to 24 hours before arranging them, and change the water daily.

PH&I LOVES

Bee happy

Three-tiered bug and bee biome, includes bee guide and a packet of wildflower seeds, £23.99, www.rspb.org.uk.

Date for your diary

Pashley Manor in Sussex is holding an exhibition of art by Joy Adamson of Born Free fame, from 14-19 March. www.pashleymanorgardens.com.

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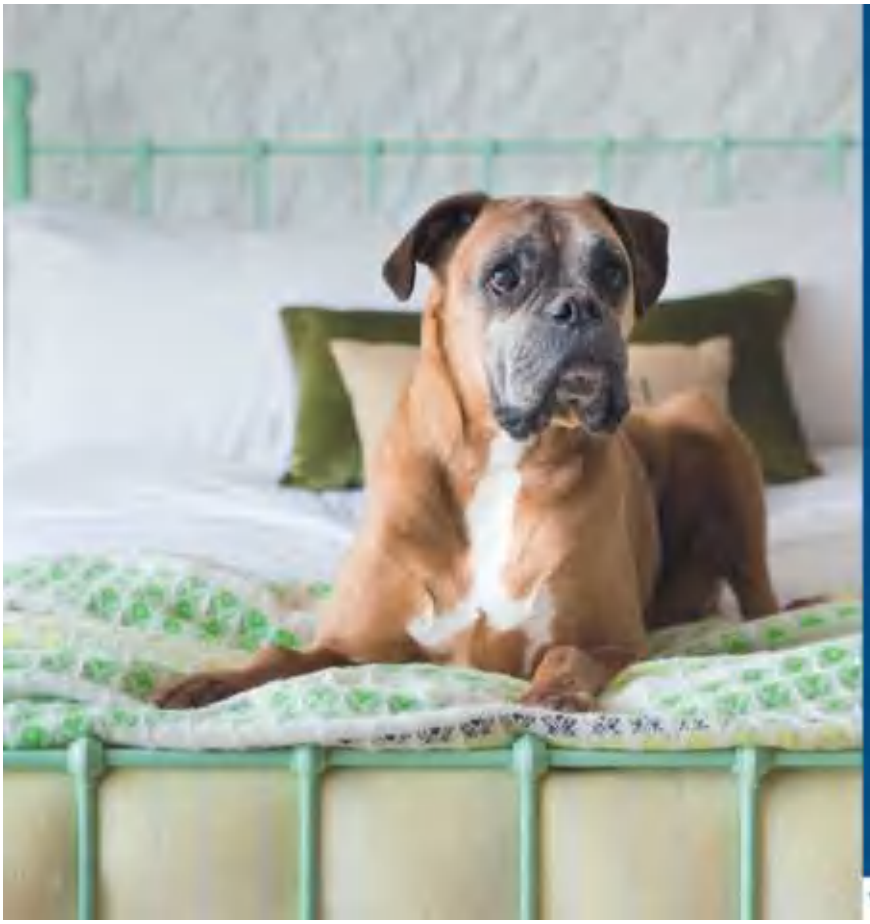

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Style advice

Trompe l'oeil wallpaper creates a 'trick of the eye' with its realistic effect. For more designs, try www.rockettstgeorge.co.uk and www.mrperswall.co.uk.

For stockists turn to page 112

Look carefully, for all is not as it seems. Everything on the wall – from the books and the vases to the shelving and the framed picture – is all part of an intricate wallpaper design called Masterpiece from the Galleria collection by Prestigious Textiles. It's pricey at £197 per roll, but you would only need to paper one wall to create a truly wow-factor statement.

Sensational SPRING TRENDS

Give your home a wonderful new look this season with these inspiring decorating ideas

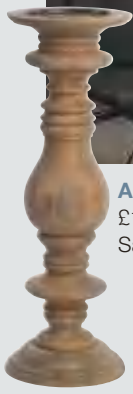
For stockists turn to page 112

Above left Primrose Hill Marble Matt emulsion, £38 for 2.5 ltrs, Mylands.
Above right Clay Pale absolute matt emulsion, £38 for 2.5 ltrs, Little Greene.
Right Faux olive tree, £15, George.

THE LOOK

Natural country

There's nothing quite like a palette of verdant greens to lift the spirits. Versatile and easy to live with, this trend is the ideal choice for creating a peaceful mood. Get the look with subtle printed fabrics, muted tones and natural finishing touches.



Above Botanist embroidered cushion, £14; green glass vase, £12; large trinket box, £8; other items, from a selection; all Sainsbury's. **Left** Nkuku Akello candlestick, £49.95, Amara.

Highlands armchair in Linamore Charcoal, £1,199; Croft grey throw, £250; Sitting Firm Kennet side table, £399; Wright task lamp, £85; Croft knot rug £310; Croft Amberley jug (used as a vase), £18; all John Lewis.

PH&I LOVES

Right Hamble fabric 005 green, £96 per m, Fermoie; Scrapwood wallpaper by Piet Hein Eek, £199 per roll, Furnish.

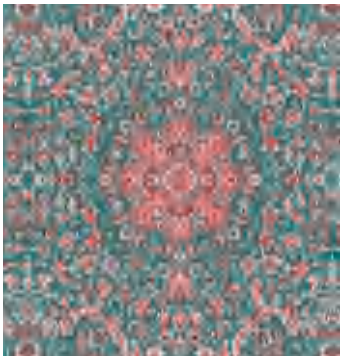
Opposite **A plush green sofa provides the perfect place to relax in this calm living room.** Walls in Cotton White emulsion, £32 for 2.5 ltrs; Curtains in Willow Leaf Hedgerow fabric, £36 per m; wooden 35mm curtain pole in white scratched finish, from £90; Chatsworth two-seater sofa in Chester Hedgerow, £1,800; Lyneham coffee table, £700; Elgin side tables, £85 each; Helmsley natural rug, £250; Marina jar lamp, £80; Garden Birds printed vase, £28; metal butterfly bowl, £20; Willow Leaf mugs, £10 each; Nigella cushions in apple and natural, £40 each; all Laura Ashley.

FEATURE EMMA CLAYTON

Above left Cochineal matt emulsion, £38 for 2.5 ltrs, Fired Earth. **Above** Aubusson Blue wall paint, £39.95 for 2.5 ltrs, Annie Sloan.

PH&I LOVES

Persian wallpaper in Seledine by Young & Battaglia, £126 per roll, Lime Lace.



For stockists turn to page 112

THE LOOK

Global fusion

Embrace this season's bohemian trend inspired by patterns, colours and textures from all over the world. Be bold with your decorating choices, seeking out fabrics and wallpapers with intricate designs, paints in bold jewel-like hues and quirky furniture and accessories to complete the look.

Above Traveller double duvet set, £60; cushions, from £25 each; bedspread, £80; star print photo frame, £25; mini lanterns (hanging), £18 each; all Linea Home at House of Fraser.

Metallic touches will enhance this theme so look out for cut-metal lanterns and decorative pieces

Above left Yasmin Cream Gold wallpaper by Eijffinger, £79 per roll, Wallpaper Direct. **Above right** Dalhousie chair in Muskat Blue, £539, Iqrup + Ritz. **Below** Cushion, £18, Sainsbury's.

Above left Lucente brass stool, £169, Swoon Editions. **Above** Laser-cut tealight holder, £9.50; laser-cut hurricane, £17.50; Marrakech lantern, £45; Saharan lantern, £9.50; Java lantern light, £59; Carrie lantern, £19.50; all Marks & Spencer.

This adventurous theme offers a rich, welcoming ambience with beautiful attention to detail

Mix and match fabrics in bold patterns and colours. Sofa and cushion on chair in Zagora 235328, £65 per m; wallhanging, chair and cushion on sofa in Anthos 235332, £75 per m; both from the Sojourn collection by Sanderson.

Choose smart furniture with simple silhouettes – this elegant corner sofa is ideal. Farringdon corner chaise sofa, £1,850; velvet cushions, £28 each; chevron cushion, £38; Farringdon nest of two tables, £340; swing-arm lamp (just seen), £60; frames, from £10; Farringdon coffee table, £430; geometric serving bowl, £43; geometric cup, £6; geometric saucer, £4.50; geometric teapot, £37.50; bulb vase, £14; Blade rug, from £220; all J by Jasper Conran at Debenhams.

A vibrant dash of deep orange adds the perfect accent colour to this appealing decorating scheme

Above Geo swirl cushion, £30, Linea at House of Fraser. **Above right** Blazer estate emulsion, £39.50 for 2.5 ltrs, Farrow & Ball. **Right** Moonstone Grey matt emulsion, £25.42 for 2.5 ltrs, Craig & Rose Authentic Period Colours at B&Q.

THE LOOK

Modern classics

This trend combines the best of traditional and contemporary design. Start off with an understated backdrop of cool grey and white, adding simply designed furniture with timeless appeal. Then introduce fabric and wallpaper with classic motifs and modern metallic finishes.

Above Axiom wallpaper by Albany Symmetry, £28 per roll, Wallpaper Direct. **Left** Block Stripe throw, £59, Marks & Spencer.

Curtains and chair in Vence Granite V3167/07, £30 per m; striped chair and cushion in Quentin Begonia V3170/01, £45 per m; grey cushion in Arnaud Granite V3168/01, £45 per m; all Etta collection at Villa Nova.

Enhance this simple look with beautifully crafted accessories

PH&I LOVES

For stockists turn to page 112

Above Hatton 4 table lamp, £499, Original BTC at John Lewis. **Left** Oxford stripe cotton fabric in grey, £29.50 per m, Ian Mankin; Lucas fabric in Orange J851F-05, £42 per m, Jane Churchill at Colefax & Fowler.

Above left Albany Geranium vinyl matt emulsion, £25.84 for 2.5 ltrs, Designer Paint. **Above right** Spring Rose Light + Space matt, £26.48 for 2.5 ltrs, Dulux.

For stockists turn to page 112

Mara bench in oak and peppermint, £299, Swoon Editions.

Above Penelope's Muse linen in Multi F0825/01, £42 per m, Artbook by Kim Parker at Clarke & Clarke.

THE LOOK

Watercolour

Beautiful painterly designs remain popular this season, adding instant impact. Whether you choose to go all out with statement wallpaper or simply update your sofa with a few abstract cushions, it's a great way to bring some creativity into your home.

Hopea Summer wall art, £25 per m; Summer Garden framed large artwork, £89; Elemental glassware, from £54; all Voyage Maison.

Above Impressionist Landscape cushion, £8; Floral Pink Stripe cushion, £12; Jacquard Brush Strokes cushion, £8; Pink Fringed cushion, £7; all George. **Below** Green Watercolour Stripe wallpaper, £15 per roll, Next.

PH&I LOVES

Above Floral hurricane, £25, Marks & Spencer. **Left** Bluebellgray Wee Archie cushion, £80, Amara.

This wonderfully cheerful trend offers an easy way to introduce vivid shades and patterns to your home

Layers of colourful linens create an enticing mood in the bedroom. Hampton bedstead, from £579; Carrie bedding set, from £40, Waterflower bedding set, from £40; all BHS.

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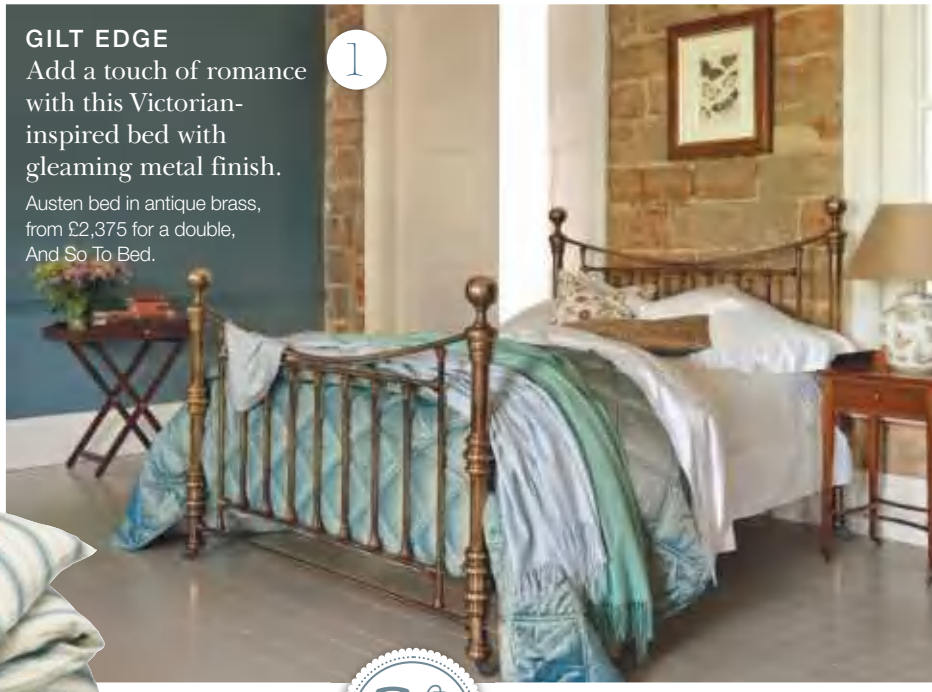
Focus on...Beds

We spend more time in our beds than anywhere else, so make sure yours is super-comfy and stylish to boot

March is National Bed Month, so it's the perfect opportunity to give your bed a quick revamp or a simple spring clean. According to The Sleep Council, your health can be improved by washing your bedding more regularly. Luckily these days most pillows and duvets can be popped in the washing machine, though some natural feather and down duvets will need professional cleaning.

If you're in the market for a new bed, make a list of what's most important to you, for example price, size or shape. If space is an issue then a divan with under-bed storage will be a great investment, while an existing divan can be given a new lease of life by adding a new headboard.



1

GILT EDGE

Add a touch of romance with this Victorian-inspired bed with gleaming metal finish.

Austen bed in antique brass, from £2,375 for a double, And So To Bed.

2

LUXURY LINEN

Linen bedding keeps you warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer and has a lovely textured feel.

Bedlinen in The Vineyard Stripe, from around £30 for a pillowcase, Libeco Home.

For stockists turn to page 112

3

STATEMENT PIECE

Part of a stunning new range, this dramatic-looking upholstered bed has subtle wing and button detailing.

Ashdown bed, can also be upholstered in your choice of material, from £1,450 for a double, Laura Ashley.

FRENCH STYLE

Hand-carved from reclaimed fir, this elegant sleigh bed has an off-white heritage paint finish.

Lauren bed, from £895 for a double, Loaf.

4

5

HAND-CARVED

This French-style bedside table is made from recycled pine, which shows up the natural grain of the wood.

Herlinda recycled pine bedside table, 71 (h) x 60 (w) x 40cm (d), £189, Out There Interiors.

PAINTERLY STROKES

Pretty pastels add colour to neutral bedding. This cushion features an abstract pattern in a watercolour style.

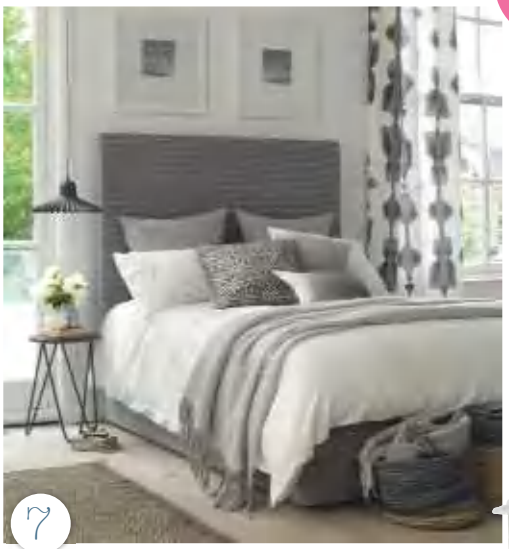
Lola cushion with contrasting pompoms, 50 (w) x 30cm (d), £75, Bluebellgray.

6

FEATURE SOPHIE WARREN-SMITH

Focus on... Beds

PH&I LOVES



7

HOTEL CHIC

A high-backed headboard creates a grand, sophisticated look. Team it with a divan base and you also have super storage.

Lavender double divan in Brera Cestino Noir F1996/04 by Designers Guild, £2,050, Button & Sprung.

Palais Avenue upholstered bed, comes in King, £1,985, and Super King sizes, £2,095, The French Bedroom Company.

8

ULTIMATE GLAMOUR

This eye-catching bed has hand-carved baroque-style acanthus leaves across the framework that is finished with a crackle-glaze in antique white with gold highlights.

10

STORE IT

Keep blankets, spare pillows and bedding in this white painted and embellished blanket box.

French white Rococo blanket box, 52 (h) x 100 (w) x 45cm (d), £229, Newtons Furniture.

HEAD'S UP

For an easy update, consider replacing your headboard. This statement design has a rolled top and buttoned board and is easy to fix to a divan base.

11

Orkney double headboard in Owl Grey, £499, Made.

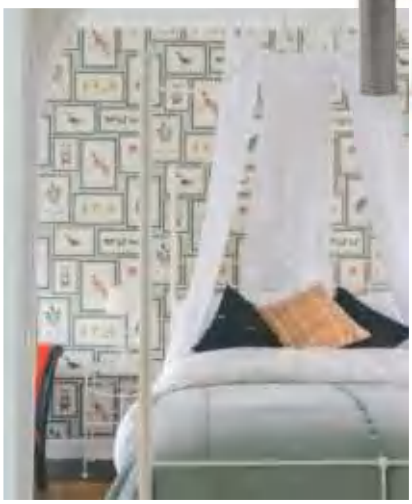
For stockists turn to page 112

9

INSTANT UPDATE

If you love your bed but want a quick update, invest in some luxurious bedding.

Malvik double duvet cover, £80; pillowcases, £30 for a pair; Leaf silhouette cushion, £35; Stripe cushion, £35; Asta bedspread, £150; all Gray & Willow at House of Fraser.



12

FOUR POSTER

Named after Elsa the lion, this classic iron bed comes with a hoop fitting to hold a muslin or fabric drape.

Elsa wrought iron double bed, £799, Wrought Iron & Brass Bed Co.

The Hidden Jem

The lovely Grey Patchwork bedspread

The most gorgeous patchwork quilt in soft grey and white fabrics

This quilt is made from 200 thread count cotton and is an exclusive design to The Hidden Jem

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Dark and dramatic

This dark blue kitchen might be striking, but it's not overwhelming as it's part of a scheme that includes a pale floor, glass sky light, white surfaces and natural timber, as well as glazed cabinets. Take the plunge and go for a dramatic colour.

Bespoke kitchens by Woodstock are made and designed in Britain, priced from £30,000. 020 8876 0131, www.woodstockfurniture.co.uk.

Don't miss our **KITCHEN SPECIAL** in the April issue, on sale 11 march

IN THE KITCHEN

Embrace a strong, stylish look, with a touch of whimsy for spring and Easter celebrations

Serving board (part of a Lazy Susan), £98; bowls, from £4; www.johnlewis.com.

MADE FOR SHARING

The Social range of cookware by Jason Atherton for John Lewis includes a Lazy Susan set with removeable pedestal and marble board for informal meals with friends.

Amazing lace

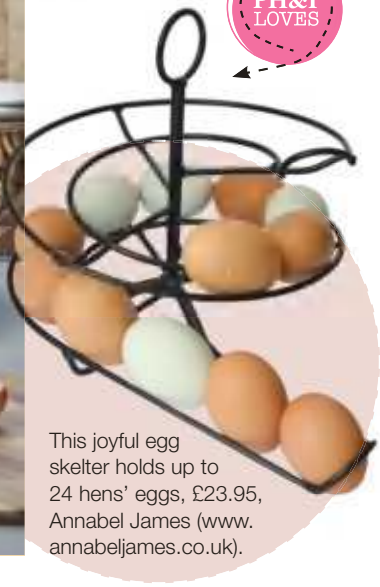
Smart enough to be used for serving cheeses and cold meats, this birch chopping board by Hanna Francis will make an elegant and versatile addition to your kitchen.

EASTER LIGHTS

Create a celebratory Easter table with these gorgeous egg cup candle holders with an antique silver leaf finish, £9.95 for a set of three, by Nordic House. A set of six hen egg candles is £7.95. www.nordichouse.co.uk.

Lace serving board, £23, Scandi Living (01428 608050, www.scandiliving.com).

PH&I LOVES



This joyful egg skelter holds up to 24 hens' eggs, £23.95, Annabel James (www.annabeljames.co.uk).

Cheers big-ears!

We can't resist a decorated tumbler, whether it's for water, wine or even a glass of milk. Daisy The Rabbit tumblers, £1.95 each, www.dotcomgiftshop.com.

CREATE A CLASSIC RETRO LOOK

For a low-key retro look at affordable prices, pay a visit to BHS. Square platter, £12; storage jars, £10 each; placemats, £9.60 for four; 12-piece crockery set, £29.99. www.bhs.co.uk.

For focal-point freestanding pieces, visit www.listersinteriors.com/furniture-kitchen and take a look at the granite-topped oak cabinets.

FEATURE LINDA PARKER

Coming next month APRIL ISSUE

Period Homes & INTERIORS

20 ways to transform your kitchen

Plus Real-life inspiration

REVEALED

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Scandi *style*

Discover how to GET THE LOOK

DECORATING

Pretty pastel colour schemes to recreate

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20 IDEAS FOR...

Beautiful bathrooms

Add colour, texture and pattern to your period bathroom – think outside the box and include stand-alone items of furniture to create a unique look

1 ON THE WALL

Even the smallest bathroom will have space for a useful wall cupboard. Pay a visit to a reclamation yard or antique market, or go for this soft-green painted wall cabinet with glazed door and carved detail, 75.5cm (h) x 52cm (w) x 18cm (d), £150, by Pastel Lane. 07949 339416, www.pastellane.co.uk.

2

For *more beautiful towels* to update your bathroom, turn to page 95

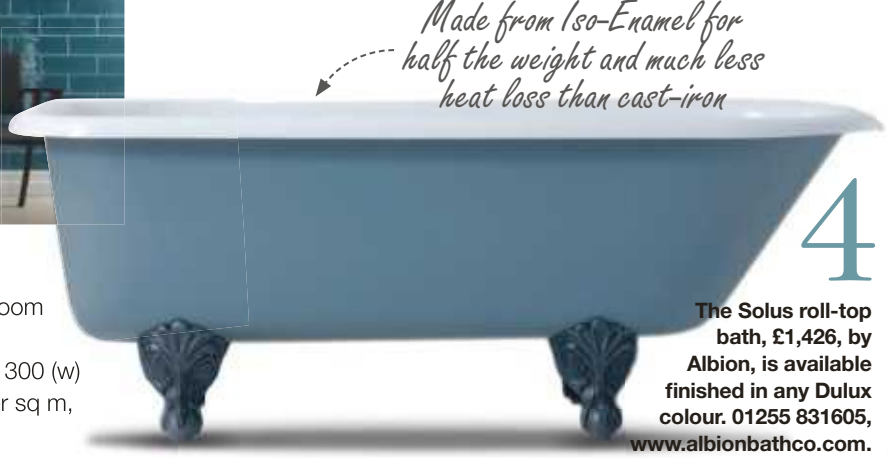
Jungle and floral themes are very fashionable at the moment but fit perfectly into a period scheme with their echoes of elaborate Victorian-style garden rooms.

Butterfly towels, from £10 to £30; dressing table mirror, £50; soap dispenser, £15; toothbrush holder, £12; set of candles, £10; all Matthew Williamson for Debenhams. 03445 616161, www.debenhams.com.

FEATURE LINDA PARKER

3 Simply tiled

Create a traditional-looking bathroom scheme with Subway-style tiles. Manhattan glazed porcelain tiles, 300 (w) x 100mm (d), shown here in Jeans, £65.64 per sq m, by Reed Harris. www.reedharris.co.uk.



4

The Solus roll-top bath, £1,426, by Albion, is available finished in any Dulux colour. 01255 831605, www.albionbathco.com. >>

FLOOR PATTERNS

Choose marble and stone parquet tiles for a practical, hardwearing surface – a good choice for smaller cloakrooms and wet rooms. From top: Silk Georgette Hungarian Point, £235 per sq m; Hanover Blue Herringbone, £99.95 per sq m; Reclaimed Hungarian Point, £349 per sq m; all Lapicida. www.lapicida.com.

5

Use on walls as well as floors for a statement look

6 Absolute elegance

It's a big task to pull everything together to create a new bathroom, and professional design advice is worth its weight in gold. Visit www.foamandbubbles.com if you're embarking on a refurbishment, then click on the 'Home Consultation' tab to announce your project on the website – up to three designers will respond with advice and ideas.

7

PERSONAL DETAILS

A bespoke bathroom can be designed to exactly suit your space and requirements, fitting seamlessly into any quirky room sizes or angles. Bespoke marble vanity unit, price on application; taps from the Fairfield collection in stainless steel, from £998; all Ripples. 0800 107 0700, www.ripples.ltd.uk.

8 Traditional tile patterns are influencing lots of home interior products at the moment. Moroccan Tile bathmat in navy and white, £25, BHS. www.bhs.co.uk.

10

PH&I LOVES

Always choose bathroom lights that have been given an IP44 rating if they're to be placed near a wash basin. Penyard light (left), £205; Hereford globe (right), £225; both Fritz Fryer. www.fritzfryer.co.uk.

11

An antique washstand should always be accompanied by a pitcher, perfect for summer flowers. Nordal flowery jug, 21cm (h), £29, Amara. 0800 587 7645, www.amara.com.

9 MAYBE MARBLE

Real marble can be extremely pricey, but it's perfectly possible to get the same look using porcelain tiles. Palazzo porcelain tiles cost from £100 per sq m from Stone & Ceramic Warehouse, and come in two sizes. 020 8993 5545, www.sacw.co.uk.

12 Dream bathroom

A bath designed for reclining really should have a view from the window, so think carefully about your bathroom layout. Chariot bath on metal plinth, £2,900, Chadder & Co. www.chadder.com.

>>

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or go to: www.albionbathco.com

ALBION

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This Cascata hand-held bath and shower mixer, £500, from Utopia, is essential for hair-washing and rinsing

13

Bathroom storage is vital if the room is in use by all the family. Drawer space is invaluable, while a WC can be combined with a back-to-wall unit and recessed shelves.

Ceramic basin and double drawer unit, £835; mirror cabinet, £749; WC and unit, £649; all Utopia. 01902 406402, www.utopiagroup.com.

14

Hang up towels, face cloths and washbags with the Maroodi wall panel, 45 (w) x 12cm (h), £9.95, Myakka. 0345 460 3122, www.myakka.co.uk.

15

KEEP IT WARM

A heated towel rail is a practical addition as it ensures you have warm towels, even if the central heating is turned off elsewhere in the house. Arched Three-Bar towel rail, shown here in Silver Nickel finish, £1,800, Catchpole & Rye. 020 7351 0940, www.catchpoleandrye.com.

PH&I LOVES

16

The Renee Petite chest in a distressed cornflower-blue finish would perfectly suit an old-fashioned bathroom, 80 (h) x 57 (w) x 32cm (d), £269, Swoon Editions. www.swooneditions.com.

>>

18

Budding designers take note, a large expanse of mirror will dramatically increase the impact of focal-point pieces such as a freestanding bath.

Tay freestanding bath with plinth and polished exterior, £5,460; Classic bath and shower mixer, £2,448; Dalby shower with 300mm rose, £2,820; all Drummonds. 020 7376 4499, www.drummonds-uk.com.

17

PAINTED & PRACTICAL

Keep the bathroom clutter under control with a compact chest of drawers. Chest in solid painted pine, £39.99, from the Stow range by Noa & Nani. 01303 872957, www.noaandnani.co.uk.

Keep bathroom supplies out of sight by investing in enclosed storage features

19

OLD-SCHOOL STYLE

We can't resist distressed, retro-style storage ideas. This locker-style cabinet is made from mango wood and measures 155 (h) x 103 (w) x 35cm (d), also in grey, £680, from Out There Interiors. 020 8099 7443, www.outthereinteriors.com.

20

All lined up

Fitted furniture looks elegant, solves all storage problems and complements all styles of home. Burford 600mm basin cabinet, from £355; solid-surface basin and work surface, £499; back-to-wall WC unit, £354; full-height twin cupboards, £420 each; all Roper Rhodes. 01225 303900, www.roperrhodes.co.uk.

Throw in the towel

Update your bathroom in an instant for spring with our pick of the prettiest towels and accessories

Cross stitch bath towel, £6; Damask hand towel, £6; ceramic fish ornament, £7; soap dispenser, £5; tumbler, £3; soap dish, £3; Egyptian cotton textured towels, from £4 each; all George.

Chrome towel ring with ceramic detail, 16cm (dia), £14, Cooke & Lewis at B&Q.

Zigzag towel bale in Peach Mix, £25 for two bath towels and two hand towels, Marks & Spencer.

Harlequin Paradise towel in Flamingo, from £10 for a hand towel, Christy.

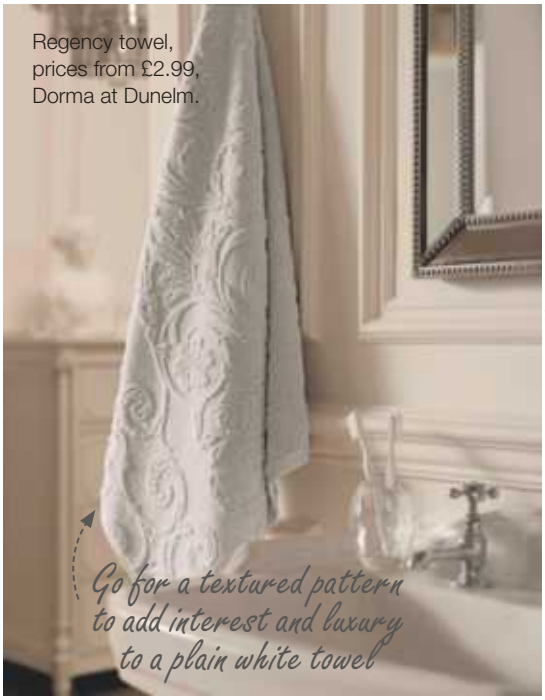
Home Collection turquoise fern towels, from £7, Debenhams.

For stockists turn to page 112

Stack, hang and air your towels with this clever Inox rack, £79.99, Just Taps Plus.

Isometric towels in fashionable Steel and Dandelion, £8 for a hand towel, John Lewis.

Birds & Roses towels in green, from £6 for a face cloth, Cath Kidston.



Regency towel, prices from £2.99, Dorma at Dunelm.

Go for a textured pattern to add interest and luxury to a plain white towel

Cottonsoft Bianca towels in Grey, from £7 to £22, Very.

Honeycomb towel in Golden Beige, £35, Ville & Campagne.

FEATURE LINDA PARKER

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ASK THE EXPERTS

We answer the questions to all your renovating projects and decorating dilemmas

Q I'm looking for practical but decorative built-in storage for our large collection of books. What can you suggest?

A Bespoke storage solutions such as custom-made bookcases and cabinets can be designed to cleverly store and hide away all your items while creating a beautiful feature. If your home has bay windows, consider adding a window seat. Not only will this create a focal point but will also provide extra seating and hidden storage underneath for your treasured novels. Utilising awkward spaces such as the area under the stairs is another place where you can create a unique storage area for your books and decorative objects. With the addition of soft-close handleless drawer units, an area in the home that would previously have been ignored can become a personalised storage hub.

Brian Pontin, Furniture Design Expert, Neville Johnson

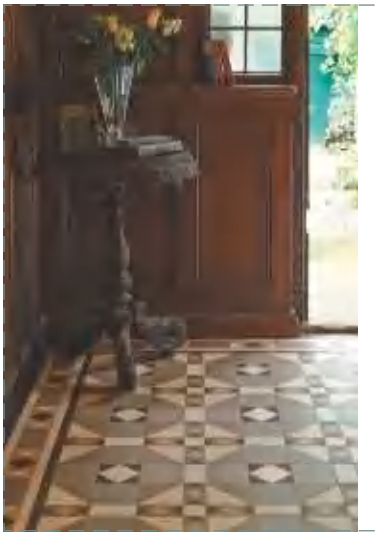
White library concept, from £3,000, Neville Johnson (0161 873 8333, www.nevillejohnson.co.uk)

Q What type of carpet should I choose for my living room? I want something neutral but hardwearing that won't show every mark and stain.

A Neutral carpets in shades of beige and grey remain a firm favourite because they accentuate a feeling of space and provide an ideal base colour. Where value-for-money and practicality is a top priority, choose an easy-clean polypropylene fibre that is dirt-resistant, stain-resistant and bleach-cleanable. Polypropylene carpets come in a wide range of weights, and the depth of the pile is a good indication of how durable a carpet will be. Heather shades (where two colours are used together) are also great for disguising marks.

David Cormack, Marketing Director, Cormar Carpets

Apollo Plus polypropylene carpet, available in 15 shades, £17 per sq m, Cormar Carpets (01204 881234, www.cormarcarpets.co.uk)



Q What tiles should we choose to recreate an authentic look on the hallway floor of our Victorian home?

A You can choose to complement a contemporary interior with a simple chessboard design, or recreate authentic features by picking intricate patterns in classic clay colours of red, black, white, brown and buff. Victorian floor tiles have stood the test of time and to underline their charm we recommend using borders. It's like framing a picture – enhancing the existing design or adding interest to something less complex.

Jane Addis, New Product Co-ordinator & Designer, Original Style

Colchester pattern with Thackaray border, £203.25 per sq m, Original Style (01392 473004, www.originalstyle.com)

Q The windows of my period property need replacing. What options are there other than expensive wooden windows?

A Evolution Windows has developed a brand new genre called Timber Alternative windows. These take inspiration from the beautiful aesthetics of timber at a more affordable price, and without the drawbacks of the time-consuming maintenance and costly upkeep required with real wood. The intricately detailed, handcrafted elements exactly replicate expensive wooden windows so it's difficult to believe they are not real timber. They provide the very best, low-maintenance option that will last for years, adding value and keeping your property looking beautiful.

Surgit Singh, Managing Director, Evolution Windows

Timber Alternative windows, from £1,000 for a window measuring 130 (w) x 125cm (d), Evolution Windows (0845 6032511, www.evolutionwindows.com)

Supporting role

Putting in supports now for exuberant plants to climb through will ensure a magnificent disply come summer

You can buy all kinds of decorative supports. Barrington spiral support, 1.8 metres, £14, Garden Trading.

How to...
Support your plants

Perennials, annuals and biennials that are tall and fragile may need help to stand tall in the border. Putting in supports now for exuberant plants to climb through or up will prevent damage to the stems and flowers in the event of gusts of wind or heavy rain. Supports can also contain the spread of a plant.

Plants that need support include dahlias, sweet peas (above), phlox, delphiniums, peonies, alstroemeria, monkshood and, of course, peas and beans.

TYPES OF SUPPORT

You can buy decorative metal supports, selecting from an array of wire grids, hoops and spirals. Most will last for many years, so are a good long-term investment, or you can have a go at making some yourself from stems and twigs.

For stockists turn to page 112

Make your own...

Teepee twig support

1 Collect 3-5 small branches (let them dry out). 2 Push the branches into the ground around the plant. 3 Tie the tops with twine.

Domed twig support

1 Collect young, pliable stems such as willow. 2 Weave stems into a circle as you would a Christmas wreath and secure with twine. 3 Take two larger stems and bend into arches, one crossed over the other – the size needs to fit the woven circle halfway down the arched shape. 4 Tie at the top of the criss-crossed arch. 5 Feed the ends of the two arch stems through the circle one at a time then secure in the ground.

Tip *To make it easier to tie supports, put them in a bucket to hold their shape*

Left Loire obelisk, 1.6 metres, £34.99, Crocus. **Right** Gardman Fleur de Lys obelisk, 1.5 metres, £19.99, Longacres Garden Centre.

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TIPS FOR RENOVATING A LISTED BUILDING

Unique Buildings: Unique Challenges

The Listed Property Owners Club is expert in dealing with the challenges of a listed building, and has put together these guiding principles to help owners who are looking to undertake repairs or alterations to their home

The Listed Property Show

Don't miss this informative show, which brings you all the specialist information and expert help needed to conserve, renovate or buy a listed property, **12-13 March 2016** at *Harrogate International Centre*. For more details and free tickets, visit www.lpoc.co.uk/property-show.

Rely on tried and tested technology

Experience has shown that using modern technology alongside traditional building methods can cause irreversible damage. One of the most widespread examples is the use of cement mortar for pointing, rendering in solid wall buildings and infill panels in timber-framed buildings. Historic buildings tend to be constructed of permeable materials such as lime mortar, soft bricks and stone. The introduction of hard, impervious mortars encourages moisture to dwell in the brick, stonework or timber frame, which will suffer from accelerated deterioration and decay.

Waterproof membranes can be harmful

Inserting a waterproof membrane in any traditional wall, floor or roof will prevent the building from breathing and result in concentrations of moisture. Traditional solid wall buildings are constructed of materials that absorb moisture when the weather is wet or humid and give it out by evaporation when it is dry. Methods used in modern building constructions such as damp proof membranes, vapour barriers and any impervious layers should be avoided.

Make sure all alterations are reversible

In practice this means fitting the new around the old rather than altering the old to accommodate the new. Avoid the loss of historic fabric of whatever age, steer clear of physically or visually invasive alterations and leave historic wall, floor or ceiling finishes unaltered, as they tell an important part of the building's story. The patina of age is valuable and cannot be replaced once lost.

Keep repairs to a minimum

If you are simply carrying out essential maintenance, such as repointing or window repairs, try to keep as much of the historic fabric as possible. Only repair when it is absolutely necessary to do so as 'over-restoration' can result in a loss of historic fabric and character.

Know the history of your home

Before embarking on any renovation project, learn about what makes your home significant: understand its story and why it was listed in the first place.

Grade II-listed Northgate House is on the market for £1.5 million through www.lpoc.co.uk.

MAIN PICTURE: THIS GRADE II-LISTED FARMHOUSE WAS RECENTLY MARKETED BY JOHN D WOOD & CO (WWW.JOHNDWOOD.CO.UK)

Appear on TV

Do you live in a Victorian terrace, a Regency flat, an Edwardian semi or something even older? If you are about to undertake a major transformation of the interior of your period property, but don't know where to start, architect and TV presenter George Clarke would love to hear from you. If you would like to star in the next series of *House Rules* on Channel 4 contact the team at info@amazingproductions.co.uk

• The Listed Property Owners Club (LPOC) is Britain's only advice service dedicated to helping members get the most from their homes. Members benefit from a dedicated telephone helpline where you can speak to a panel of experts on conservation, VAT, law and listed building matters. The LPOC Suppliers Directory of professionals, builders and tradesmen is the first port of call for many listed building owners across the country. For more details visit www.lpoc.co.uk.

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You and a guest will be checking in to the five-star Fairmont St Andrews resort hotel in Scotland for an overnight stay of fine dining and pampering

Set on a 520-acre estate with a beautiful coastal setting, the five-star Fairmont St Andrews encompasses the finest in local culture with luxury and elegance. The resort is in the process of updating its public areas with a rich colour scheme and nautical elements that reflect the surrounding landscape, including a lighting installation by artist George Singer.

The resort has a host of facilities for the lucky winner to explore including two world-class golf courses, The Torrance and The Kittocks, and diverse yet luxurious eating facilities. Enjoy the finest in local Scottish steak and seafood at St Andrews Bar & Grill, while La Cucina serves traditional Italian favourites by authentic Italian chefs.

The indulgent signature spa is not to be missed and comprises a lush 16-metre pool, sauna, steam room, Jacuzzi and fully equipped gymnasium, while 12 individual treatment rooms ensure your experience here is truly memorable.

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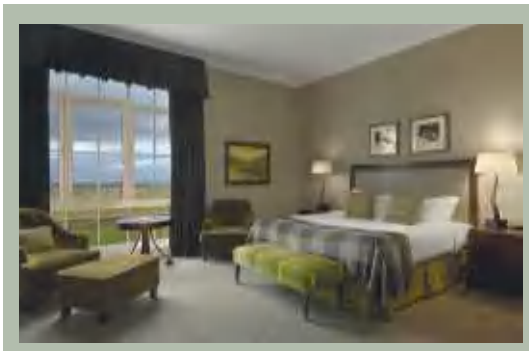

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ENTER ONLINE BY VISITING: www.periodhomesandinteriors.com Closing date: 29 February 2016

Terms & conditions Entries close at midnight on 29 February 2016. Winners will be selected at random from all entries received. The winner will be contacted after the prize draw closes by Fairmont or by its appointed representatives. If the winning entrant cannot be contacted after reasonable attempts have been made, Fairmont reserves the right to stand that entrant down and select another winner. The decision of Fairmont is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Fairmont reserves the right to alter and/or cancel the prize draw without any prior warning. All personal data submitted with consent will be kept by Fairmont for the purpose of sending out the prize. The prize will be in the form of a Gift Certificate, which must be presented at the time services are rendered.There is no cash alternative, it is non-transferable, not for resale and cannot be replaced if lost or stolen. Prize is subject to availability and includes an overnight stay for two people in a Deluxe Sea View King room, dinner for two from the Market Menu (excluding drinks), full Scottish breakfast, access to the Signature Spa and your choice of an Express Spa Treatment or a round of golf each. Please note that treatment appointments in the Spa, tee time bookings and dinner reservations must be made well in advance of your stay to ensure availability, and are not included within the voucher unless otherwise stated. The prize is based on two sharing. The Gift Certificate is not valid from 21 December 2016 to 3 January 2017, nor is it valid on Saturdays or for the duration of Special Events. Expiry date of voucher will be advised at the time of issue, and voucher must be used prior to the expiry date. No extension to the expiry date will be considered. Additional expenses are the responsibility of the prize winner. Travel is not included. The main photo image used is a rendering of the lobby area, which will be under renovation during April. For a renovation schedule, please visit www.fairmont.com/standrews The prize draw is not open to employees of Fairmont, MediaJamm or Kelsey Publishing Group. Only one entry permitted per person, no bulk entries will be accepted. We reserve the right to cancel the promotion if circumstances change that are beyond our control. By entering you agree to be bound by all the rules and agree that your surname and county may be released if you win. By providing personally identifiable information when entering this promotion, you are agreeing that we may use it to provide you with on-going information about our products and services, although you can unsubscribe at any time, if you wish to do so. *Period Homes & Interiors* is a Kelsey Media brand. Kelsey Media will only ever use your information in line with its Multi Layered Privacy Notice. For full details, visit www.kelsey.co.uk. If you have any questions please ask as submitting your data indicates your consent, until you choose otherwise, that we may contact you about products and services that we believe to be of relevance to you.

PH&I *picks...* Top 20 *Dream homes*

We've found properties for sale that are brimming with period details and character

PROPERTY OF THE MONTH

01 HOLCOMBE, SOMERSET
PRICE: £895,000

The Hop House is a former brewery that's been converted into a family home. Steeped in local history, the brewery was lived in and run by Scott of the Antarctic's parents and the renovation has kept the charm and original features of the property, including exposed stonework, beams and large windows. The open-plan living area is dominated by an enormous arched window, which lets light flood in, and there's a fireplace in the middle of the room. Downstairs there's also a large kitchen/diner with white-painted cabinetry, wood worktops and slate flooring, plus a study. Upstairs the galleried landing adds a sense of grandeur and overlooks the living area and garden. There are four bedrooms, one of which is en suite, and another with a roll-top bath in the bedroom. There's also a family bathroom on this floor. The property is surrounded by countryside and is seven miles from Frome. Fine & Country, 01225 320032, www.fineandcountry.com.

This former brewery was once lived in and run by Scott of the Antarctic's parents

02 BROOKMANS PARK, HERTFORDSHIRE
PRICE: £1,250,000

Once part of the Warrenwood Park Estate, The Folly is a unique home dating back to Victorian times. The property boasts a large roof terrace, while the first floor is split-level with the kitchen/breakfast room overlooking the dining area. The first floor has two en-suite bedrooms and the second-floor master bedroom is accessed via an external enclosed stairway. Fine & Country, 01707 662222, www.fineandcountry.com.

FEATURE ANDREA MANLEY. **PLEASE NOTE** PRICES AND PROPERTY AVAILABILITY ARE CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS. VISIT THE ESTATE AGENT'S WEBSITE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

Did you know?...

40 per cent of people undertake renovations to improve the look of their home, while 33 per cent do it to add value*.

03 MIDHURST, WEST SUSSEX
PRICE: £995,000

South Pond cottage is a detached property with four bedrooms and three bathrooms. The living room is light and spacious with an open fire, beams and French doors to the garden. There's a contemporary kitchen/breakfast room and the property has planning permission to replace the existing conservatory with an oak-framed version. King & Chasemore, 01730 812456, www.kingandchasemore.co.uk.

04 SANDWICH, KENT
PRICE: £545,000

Grade II-listed Bayze House with double jettied elevations on two sides forms part of the longest unbroken line of jettied properties in the country. Set in the town's conservation area, the house is arranged over three floors. There are four bedrooms, one of which is en suite, a first-floor sitting room and drawing room, and a dining hallway, study and kitchen/breakfast room on the ground floor. Colebrook Sturrock, 01304 612197, www.colebrooksturrock.com.

05 THWAITE, SUFFOLK
PRICE: £400,000

Cossetts is a quintessential thatched cottage brimming with character. The cosy sitting room has beams and open studwork, an inglenook fireplace and brick flooring, and there's also an oak-framed conservatory, dining room and a small kitchen. There are three first-floor bedrooms, including a landing bedroom and a ground-floor bedroom, along with a ground-floor shower room and bathroom. Abbotts, 01473 396258, www.abbotts.co.uk.

06 FORTROSE, ROSS-SHIRE
PRICE: £675,000+

Meadowbank is a handsome, B-listed Georgian home. The main reception rooms are elegant with original open fireplaces and there's a semi-circular stone staircase leading to the two upper floors. Features include Georgian sash windows with original shutters, cornicing and picture rails. There are six bedrooms, four bathrooms and a self-contained annexe. CKD Galbraith, 01463 224343, www.ckdgalbraith.co.uk.

07 FRINTON-ON-SEA, ESSEX
PRICE: £650,000

Built in 1934 by architect Oliver Hill, The Round House is a circular Art Deco property on the seafront. Originally designed as a show home to make the modernist style more mainstream, this Grade II-listed house needs updating. The curved dining room at the front overlooks the sea, while a grand S-shaped staircase leads to three first-floor bedrooms, a shower room and a sitting room with coastal views. Outside there are gardens and a garage. The Modern House, 020 3795 5920, www.themodernhouse.net.

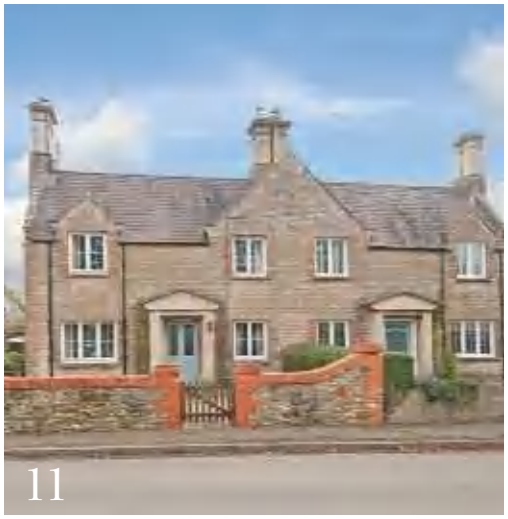
08 BOSKENWYN, CORNWALL
PRICE: £895,000

Carne House is a former Victorian coach house set in a rural Cornish location with glorious sea views to St Michael's Mount. Downstairs the property has a garden room porch, two lovely reception rooms and a spacious kitchen with Aga and stone floors leading through to a large conservatory. Upstairs are four bedrooms, two of which are en suite, and a family bathroom. Set in about 20 acres of pastureland with equestrian facilities and a 200m tree-lined drive. Country & Waterside Prestige, 01872 830217, www.countryandwaterside.co.uk.

Originally designed as a show home to make the modernist style more mainstream

The Round House, property 7

*ACCORDING TO LLOYDS BANK



09 ASKHAM RICHARD, NORTH YORKSHIRE PRICE: £795,000

The Clock Tower is part of a Victorian stable block conversion. The fully restored clock tower makes a great third-floor study and there are fantastic views of the surrounding parkland from it. Comprising four bedrooms, two of which are en suite, family bathroom, open-plan kitchen/diner, utility room and living room, the spacious property has an energy-efficient heating system and biomass boiler. Jackson-Stops & Staff, 01904 625033, www.jackson-stops.co.uk.

10 RAVEN'S GREEN, ESSEX PRICE: £799,950

Set down a private lane, this charming whitewashed house comes with a separate one-bedroom annexe, as well as a home office and summer house. The main house has four bedrooms, three bathrooms, a large kitchen/breakfast room with pantry and three reception rooms. Open fires, wooden beams and studwork are prominent throughout. Fenn Wright, 01206 763388, www.fennwright.co.uk.

11 BOURTON, WILTSHIRE PRICE: £495,000

The School House is a charming period house, renovated to create a stylish family home that blends old and new perfectly. On the front of the property it says 'Old Post House', as the school and post office were next door to each other. The open-plan kitchen/breakfast room has a double vaulted ceiling at one end, an oil-fired range cooker and adjoining utility room. There are two reception rooms, four bedrooms and two bathrooms. Strutt & Parker, 01635 897912, www.struttandparker.com.

This Grade II-listed cottage has plenty of character but requires full refurbishment

Little Thatch, property 12

12 PILL HEATH, HAMPSHIRE PRICE: £425,000

Grade II-listed Little Thatch has plenty of character, including beamed ceilings, an inglenook fireplace with bread oven and fantastic countryside views, but requires full refurbishment and modernisation. The two reception rooms, kitchen, bathroom and three bedrooms upstairs are all ripe for renovation. The roof has been recently been rethatched and the property has gardens of just under one acre. Evans & Partridge, 01264 810702, www.evansandpartridge.co.uk.

• *Turn to page 101 for expert advice and tips on renovating a listed property.*

13 ETTINGTON, WARWICKSHIRE PRICE: £850,000

Set in a village location just six miles from Stratford-Upon-Avon, Ivy House is full of traditional features, including window seats, open fires and shuttered windows. Arranged over three floors with six bedrooms and six bathrooms, the kitchen leads through to a conservatory, which acts as a link to a converted integral barn. Strutt & Parker, 01608 650502, www.struttandparker.com.

14 DRINKSTONE, SUFFOLK PRICE: £749,950

Grade II-listed with a wealth of exposed wall and ceiling timbers, an oak staircase and Suffolk latch doors, Street Farm House exudes warmth and character. The kitchen/breakfast room has a central fireplace with woodburner and stairs to a first-floor galleried games room. There are three main reception rooms, six bedrooms, two bathrooms and a garage/gym complex. David Burr, 01359 245235, www.davidburr.co.uk.

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15 ALDERLEY EDGE, CHESHIRE
PRICE: £725,000

Grade II-listed Preston Cottage is reputedly the second oldest house in the county. Downstairs there's a dining hall, two reception rooms and a kitchen, while the first floor comprises family bathroom and three bedrooms, one of which is en suite. The property also has a timber-built self-contained annexe and beautiful gardens. Jackson-Stops & Staff, 01251 328361, www.jackson-stops.co.uk.

16 MAUGERSBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE
PRICE: £425,000

Full of Cotswold charm, The Falcons is constructed from local stone with mullioned windows. The property has been refurbished and has a sitting room with open fire, open-plan kitchen/diner, three bedrooms and a family bathroom. It includes a rear garden with terrace, and a double garage and is being sold with no onward chain. The historic town of Stow-on-the-Wold is 0.5 miles away and Kingham station with trains to London Paddington is four miles away. Butler Sherborn, 01457 830731, www.butlersherborn.co.uk.

17 HOPE COVE, DEVON
PRICE: £595,000

The Moorings has a pretty pastel exterior and is located just yards from the harbour and beach. The four-bedroom/four-bathroom cottage has a first-floor sitting room and vaulted kitchen/diner to make the most of the glorious views. Period features include window seats, exposed beams and wooden floors. There's a separate annexe, off-road parking and a lovely outside decked area with views, which is perfect for summer entertaining. Marchand Petit, 01548 844473, www.marchandpetit.co.uk.

18 COBBARN, KENT
PRICE: £1,850,000

The Oast is a stunning five-bedroom conversion of a Grade II-listed twin-roundel oast and barn with further additions. Highlights include the well-proportioned rooms, exposed brickwork, a triple-aspect drawing room with an inglenook and a roundel kitchen/breakfast room opening onto a vaulted sitting room. It come with extensive outbuildings, land of around 3.5 acres and planning consent for a swimming pool. Freeman Forman, 01892 615757, www.freemanforman.co.uk.

19 PENCOED, DENBIGHSHIRE
PRICE: £499,950

Set in a stunning valley location, Uchel Dref is a rural gem with stunning views of the Berwyn Mountains and a large decked terrace. Built in the 16th century, the house is Grade II-listed with plenty of original features and an impressive staircase. There are three reception rooms, a study, six bedrooms and three bathrooms. The detached barn has scope for conversion, subject to consents, and Llangollen is 12 miles way. Halls, 01691 670320, www.hallsgb.com.

20 SCOTS GAP, NORTHUMBERLAND
PRICE: £395,000

Grange Corner House dates to 1840 and is a substantial stone-built property with a village location. There are two main reception rooms and a kitchen fitted with Shaker-style cabinetry, inglenook fireplace, window seat and slate floor. The dual-aspect master en-suite bedroom is complete with original fireplace and there are three further bedrooms and a bathroom. Outside the award-winning garden backs on to conservation woodland. Strutt & Parker, 01670 516123, www.struttandparker.com.

Do you have a beautiful period home for sale?

Email the details, plus a high-resolution image (300dpi) of the exterior to **phi.ed@kelsey.co.uk**. If your home is suitable for inclusion in the property section, a fee of £60 for subscribers, and £100 for non-subscribers, will be charged. Make your cheque payable to *Period Homes & Interiors* magazine (including subscription number if applicable) and send to On the Market, *Period Homes & Interiors*, Kelsey Media, Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG. We work two months in advance and properties are chosen at the Editor's discretion.

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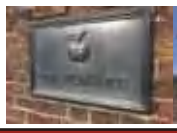

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Annie Sloan 01865 713089, www.anniesloan.com
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Swoon Editions 020 3137 2464, www.swooneditions.com

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